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Date: Thu, 29 Mar 2007 18:08:30 -0400 (EDT) From: TorahWeb.org <torahweb@torahweb.org> To: weeklydt@torahweb2.org Subject: Rabbi Mayer Twersky -

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Rabbi Mayer Twersky Shabbos Hagadol

In Jewish communities and households across the globe excitement is mounting. Feverish preparations are finally being completed, as Jews worldwide fervently await Chag Hamatzos, zman cheiruseinu (the Passover holiday, time of our freedom). The religious excitement and fervor are, of course, entirely appropriate. That is just as it ought to be. "Bechol dor vador chayav adam liros es atzmo k'ilu hu yatza miMitzrayim - in every generation one is obligated to view himself as though he had been liberated from Mitzrayim", teaches the Mishna. We are not commanded to delude ourselves.[1] The seder night, in particular, and the entire yom tov of Chag Hamatzos, in general, possess an intrinsic quality which allows us to relive the Exodus and actually experience the spiritual elevation and transformation of Yetzias Mitzrayim.[2] Chag Hamatzos is a unique, rarified time and deserves to be greeted with the aforementioned excitement and fervor.

Before Chag Hamatzos, however, comes Shabbos Hagadol. Various interpretations for the nomenclature of this Shabbos have been advanced. The interpretation upon which I would like to focus suggests that the Shabbos before Chag Hamatzos is given the appellation Shabbos Hagadol to distinguish it from the other day of Shabbos in the coming week. The Torah refers to the first day of Pesach as Shabbos. Thus on erev Shabbos Hagadol we anticipate two days of Shabbos in the coming week - viz; "regular" Shabbos and the first day of Chag Hamatzos. To distinguish these two Shabbosos we designate Shabbos as Shabbos Hagadol as distinct from the Shabbos which is the first day of Chag Hamatzos.

There is a profound, fundamental lesson conveyed in the designation of Shabbos Hagadol. Indeed Chag Hamatzos is an unique, rarified time. It is a time which should be cherished and appreciated. And, of course, this is true for all yomi tovim. Each one in its own way is rarified time. And yet the holiest of days is not one of the shalosh regalim or even the yomim noraim,

but Shabbos. On the Shabbos which is the first day of Chag Hamatzos one can relive yetzias Mitzrayim and directly experience the attendant spiritual elevation and transformation. What an incredibly great day indeed. And yet Shabbos - "yom hashevii laHashem Elokecha - the seventh day [holy] unto Hashem, your G-d" - is even greater!

Let us reflect upon that hierarchy for a moment. The greatest, holiest day of the Jewish calendar is Shabbos. Although this halachic hierarchy is indisputable[3], we do not give Shabbos its due. Human nature tends to neglect what is frequent, and lavish attention upon the infrequent. Ein navi beiro, a prophet is not recognized in his hometown. Such is the tendency of human nature. A glimpse at the natural world already exposes the folly of this tendency. Oxygen is virtually omnipresent on earth. So too is the warmth of the sun. The frequency and pervasiveness of these elements do not diminish their importance. On the contrary, they attest to their indispensability. Without oxygen and the warmth of the sun, life could not exist.

The analogue, of course, is Shabbos. The regularity of Shabbos points to its singular significance. Shabbos, explains the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh, comes weekly because without Shabbos the world would not continue to exist. "Ki sheishes yamim osoh Hashem es hashomayim vees haaretz" - because Hashem created heaven and earth for six days. The Torah does not say "besheishes yomim", in six days. Rather the Torah says "sheishes yomim", for six days. Hashem created the world with an initial charge that would last only six days. Shabbos recharges the cosmic batteries and sustains the world for another weekly cycle. "Ubayom hashevii shoves vayinofash" - and on the seventh day Hashem provided the soul (nefesh) to sustain the coming six days.

Shabbos sustains the world because Shabbos is a day entirely devoted to Hashem Yisborach who, of course, ultimately sustains all of creation. "Sheishes yomim taavod veasisa kol melachtecha veyom hasehvii Shabbos laHashem Elokecha" - six days you shall work, and attend to all your tasks, but the seventh day is (consecrated) to Hashem, your G-d. [Even the mitzvah of oneg Shabbos, enjoying Shabbos on a physical level by eating delicacies, celebrates malchus shomayim, Hashem's kingship. The pleasure which guests experience at a wedding feast does not shift the focus away from the nuptials; it is one aspect of the celebration. So too mitzvas oneg Shabbos.[4] By recognizing Hashem and celebrating malchus shomayim on Shabbos, we give purpose to the continued existence of the cosmos. And thus Shabbos sustains the entire briah.

Shabbos offers the possibility and promise not only of celebrating malchus shoamyim, but also experiencing it. We greet Shabbos, writes the Rambam, as one greets a king. That is why Shabbos, and only Shabbos, is meein olam habbah.

So our feverish preparations for Chag Hamatzos should continue unabated. But they should not for a moment eclipse our appreciation for Shabbos. We should not squander Shabbos on idle conversation. We should immerse ourselves, through davening, learning, and zemiros, in kedushas Shabbos. We should anticipate Shabbos with unparalleled excitement because Shabbos Hagadol is coming imminently - this week and every week.

[1] This insight is based upon the teachings of the Sfas Emmes [2] For further elaboration, see "And it Happened at Midnight", http://www.torahweb.org/torah/1999/moadim/rtwe_pesach.html [3] This halachic hierarchy is, inter alia, reflected in the different punishments prescribed for performing melacha on Shabbos and Yom Kippur. On Shabbos, one is liable for the most severe punishment of misas beis din, whereas on Yom Kippur one is liable "only" for kareis. See Megillah 7b. The greater kedusha of Shabbos also underlies the normative position of R' Yishmoel who assigns six aliyahs to Yom Kippur and seven to Shabbos [R' Akiva employs a different criteria for assigning the number of aliyahs.] [4] For this and other fundamental perspectives regarding Shabbos, see Rav Pinkos' Kuntres Shabbos Malkesa

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Rav Soloveitchik ZT"L Notes (Volume 3)

Notice These are unapproved unedited notes [of R. Y.?] of classes given by Rav Soloveitchik. ...[Thanks to David Isaac for typing these notes]

Lecture delivered by Rabbi Soloveitchik on Saturday night, April 7, 1979 "Shabbos Hagadol" Tonight, I shall concentrate on a few lines of the section of the Hagaddah "Arami Ovad Avi". However, I want to remind you of the construction of the Hagaddah. Constructionwise it is a very difficult book considering the sequences and events. It can be divided into either 3 or more parts (that is the section which precedes the meal). It is not merely the first half but rather more than the first half. It is the narrative or story-telling which constitutes the first half. It is sort of a "masoreh" or tradition told to younger people than ourselves.

We can say that hagaddah consists of 3 or 5 parts. The first part where emphasis is placed are the laws or "hilchos" pertaining to "yetzias Mitzraim" beginning with "Avodim Hoyinu". We say, "there is a Mitzvah 'sippur yetzias Miztraim' -- declaring the Exodus; we identify the halacha. We state the basic law. We say that in essence even if we know the story, the reason it is a "mitzvah" for us to recite Yetzias Mitzraim, is because it is the study of Torah -- like "talmud Torah," we never know it all. We never know all; there is always something to learn. The more a person will study, the more he will learn and know. Therefore, the first part is not contingent upon erudition or knowledge but is a positive commandment.

Next, we are told of the five "Rabonim" of which none was greater. Yet, they learned something new, apparently. Nextg follows "Omar Rav Elozor" (Rabbi Elazar, son of Azariah said). This identifies the "time" for "Sippur Yetzias Mitzraim" (declaring the Exodus). Next come antohre halacha, "Boruch Hamokom" (Blessed in G-d who gave the Law to His people Israel). Why is the Bal Hagaddah overcome in an ecstatic mood? Why does he get so excited, praising G-d and telling of the four sons, including the skeptic and the agnostic? Why this ecstatic enthusiasm? The answer for the rejoicing: Each one has a share! The great scholar cannot say tot he ignorant man, "My share is greater." The man who was not blessed by the Alm-ghty with a great mind but who puts in a sincere effort is recognized as an equal to the great. There is a separate text for the great mind, the simpleton and even the one who refuses -- the skeptic. A Jew has greatness and we don't know when it will emerge. It is derived from the prophet Ezekiel "Boruch Shaym K'vod Malchuso" (Blessed is the Name, the glory of His kingdom is forever). We are all in the embrace of the Alm-ghty. "Boruch Hamokom" -- Everyone, everything is in space. As one cannot escape space, so can he not escape "Hakodosh Boruch Hu". When He gave the Torah, He did not give it just to the great mind. For instance, although some minds cannot understand science and therefore have no share in science, in Torah everyone has a share. It is perhaps more important to tell the simple child than the great mind. G-d embraces the whole world as a mother embraces all her children, no matter how many. He embraces all mankind, especially the Covenantal Community.

Next comes "Mitchila" (originally our ancestors). What kind of a statement is this and what does it tell? There is not a superfluous word in the Hagaddah. Therefore, why was this recitation from the prophet Joshua introduced? It tells of our humble origin -- our low origin. According to mythology, people came into the world due to a love affair between a god and a human (Greek, Roman, Nordic). Not so us. We tell of our low origin. "We would have remained there in Egypt." "My parent was a simple

idolator." The fact that we introduced such great standards is not due to us but the initiative belongs to G-d. Our greatness is due to a special act of grace from G-d. It could have been any nation. We were chosen because of an act of grace -- a special favor. We are not deserving. Gratitude is the very basis of our faith. He invited us to come nearer. It is an act of "Chessed" - loving kindness. "You didn't display any specific traits of character to make you worthy. I selected you due to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

Next. The thought is very cryptic - short about Mount Seir for Esau - and Jacob to Egypt. They were two brothers; their destinies should have been identical. How did Esau get "Har Seir". In sedra Vayishlach - chapter 36, line 6, we are told: "Esau took his wives, sons and daughter, livestock - all he had acquired and went to a different land." He didnt' eat manna in the desert for 40 years. He merely took over the land because G-d promised it to him. He took it over quickly rather than waiting a long, long waiting period. The same promise was made to us! Did Jacob get it? For a while he did -- not quickly -- and even not now. Eventually, yes! So what idea is expressed in this short terse statement? It is the uniqueness of this statement. No other nation has received such a promise which took so long to implement. The gentile writer Ibsen said, "What is a Jew? He who waits!" No other nation knows how to wait as the Jew. This is the characteristic trait of the Jew. Therefore, there are two ideas in this paragraph -- grace and waiting.

Next is the leap! Let us start telling the history of our desting. Now begins the history -- "Arami Ovad Avi" (either my father was a wandering nomad or the Syrian almost killed my father). Relating Yetzias Mitzraim is not a narrative. It is a study in depth every Pesach; it is Talmud. We find this statement in sedra "Ki Sovo" of Deuteronomy. It is a statement or recitation made in the Bais Hamikdosh and was adopted by the Hagaddah. This they said every time they come with their gifts. Here in Hagaddah it is not merely a statement but is analyzed in depth. We employ comparative analysis between the two places. Up to this point, we merely stated halachos and the traits of our people - humble origin, etc. Now by stating these principles we start to tell the story. "Sippur" is not to tell but to study. It means "semantics in depth". In Bais Hamikdosh, it was merely a statement.

Where does the analysis end in the Hagaddah? It ends at "Rabbi Yehuda Hoyoh Hosayn Bohem Simonim" (Rabbi Yehuda assigned to them initials Detsach, Adash, Beachab". Rabban Gamliel that the 3 symbols Pesach, Matzo, Moror - be identified. Then the final "Boruch Atoh --- Asher Goalonu" (Blessed is G-d who brought us forth to this night).

Therefore, how many parts? 1) Halocho (laws). 2) Mitchila (short recitation - Jew was elected - Kabolas Ohl Hashomayim - (We accepted our role!). (It is strange that the struggle which began 3500 years ago still has not been resolved because Esau went to Seir (Rome) and Yaakov waits his destiny). We are eternally indebted to Him no matter how long it will last. This is Kabolas Ohl Hashomayim. 3) Sippur - Arami - not merely "told" but studied and understood. 4) Then we come to Hallel -- only the first 2 chapters before the meal. Why the division? Because Mitzraim is not mentioned in the second half of Hallel an dit belongs to "Pesach L'osid" - the Passover of the future. Therefore, we have four (4) parts.

Tonight, I would like to pick out four comparisons. A) Vayorayu Osonu HaMiztrim. (And the Egyptians ill-treated us). Again, this is taken from sedra Ki Sovo - the statement made by each person who came to the Bais Hamikdosh and then introduced into the Hagaddah. In the Torah, we find the same passage twice described but in slightly different language semantically. There is the famous epistle in which Moshe sent messengers to the children of Esau in order for the Israelites to pass through their land. In sedra "Chukas" of Bamidbar, chapter 20, line 16 "Vayorayu Lonu Mitzraim" (the Egyptians ill-treated us). In sedra "Ki Sovo" of Devarim - chapter 26, line 6 - "Voyorayu Osonu HaMiztrim". Again, it has exactly the same translation - Lonu - Osonu both mean "to us". Yet, there is a choice of different words. Moshe employs Lonu - the Israelites say Osonu. What did Pharaoh say? "Let us act with cunning because the Jew is cunning. Let us outwit him." He considered the Jew disloyal, one who will eat the fat of

the land but will not defend the land. Pharaoh created a reputation for the Jew as a deceitful being. It has accompanied us through the ages but was begun by Pharaoh. He has made us to be "bad fellows". He has maligned us, he has blackened our personality. "The Jew cannot be trusted."

There are many verbs in Hebrew which might occur with several cases. For example, we have "Asher Bochar Bonu" (in the blessing, "He who chose us.") This is the ablative case. It also comes in the accusative or objective case "Asher Bochar Osonu." Both mean the same superficially but what is the difference. Semantically, between the ablative and accusative case, when "Bochar" is in the ablative case, it means no consolation possible. It cannot be revoked or altered (Therefore, in Bochar Bonu - it means for example that G-d chose us and it is irrevocable.) Rambam says that the Kedushah of the Bais Hamikdash cannot be altered. It is absolute, irrevocable. If it is accusative it is weaker. It can be altered and undone. Irrevocably, we have the following: a) Torah; b) Nevuah (the prophecies); c) Eretz Yisroel; d) Yerushalaim. Therefore, ablative is strong and cannot be cancelled.

There is another way of expressing the article in Hebrew grammar. It can be expressed B' (Baze) or L' (Lamed) or we can use the article Es before the noun. "Es" is stronger. It is the ablative. B' or L' is weaker - accusative. How do we know this? This is a classic example in Torah referring love of man towards man and love of man towards G-d. Concerning love towards man it is written, "V'Ohavto L'Rayacho Komocho" (and you shall love your neighbor as yourself). Concerning G-d, it is written "V'Ohavto Es Hashem Elokecho". Towards man it is objective, weaker. Towards G-d, accusative, irrevocable. It is impossible to be absolutely dedicated to even a brother. It is not humanly possible. There is the controversy of two people in the desert with a small pitcher of water. If they share, both will die because it cannot sustain two. If one drinks, he will live, the other die. The sage Ben Peturah advocates sharing. Rabbi Akivah says that the one who has the pitcher drinks and lives. Why does he say this? Is Akivah heartless? It is because he illustrates that one cannot love another person's life as his own.

For G-d is "Es" even at the cost of your life. This is the difference between L' (Lamed) and Es. Therefore L'Rayacho for man -- Es for G-d. Do help your brother but not the same degree as yourself. Therefore, it does not say Es Rayacho. If it is a human problem, I come first. To G-d it is unmitigated love.

Now concerning Pharaoh's treatment of the Jews - If it said Yorayu L'Onu it would not be as strong. It would mean he made life a little unpleasant, irritated us, but did not want to destroy us. Osonu means to enslave the entire people, to destroy because he hated them. The same was Hitler's decision of the "final solution" at Vansee. The Germans thought he meant "L'Onu". The "heads rolling in the dust" meant Osonu. This is the "Hava Nischakmo Lo" - let us be cunning. It was the same language of Goebbels. "They acted as naive children. We won the battle. It was the "final solution". Why say Pharaoh? Because they are a security risk. They will make us leave the land. The Osonu, therefore, is complete destruction. This is how "Bal Hagaddah" interprets this.

Vayanunu. They tortured us. They caused us pain! What does it mean? It is physical forced hard labor without compensation, where each individual must deliver a certain quota. It is either the daily quota or the whip. It is either a brick made or a child entombed in its place. If I don't profit by meeting the quota it is psychologically very hard.

Vayar Es Onyanu - He saw our affliction - the enforced separation of man and wife. What prompted the Bal Hagaddah from interpreting differently between the verb of "Vayanunu" and the noun "Onyanu". It says He heard our voice. Then why does it say, "And He saw our affliction?" - our burden - our oppression. Apparently, these things were not included in their prayer. In addition to their prayer, G-d recognized things which they themselves didn't know and didn't include. What did they complain? The work! There are many forms of slavery. The most obvious is chicanery - making people work without pay. They only felt the physical aspect but not the spiritual.

The other phenomena they didn't realize. Their cry rose to G-d but was limited. Otherwise, if according to their prayers, He would have saved them physically but would not have changed them to spiritual greatness. It is said that if He merely listened to our prayers, it would have resulted in half a redemption, indeed, bad for us. Therefore, "Vayar". He took a good look. He understood that which they couldn't understand. Therefore, the "Vayar," in addition to "Vayishma". They were aware of the torture but of the different level in store for them, they were unaware!

Kol Habayn (all the sons you shall throw into the water). At the time of "Yetzias Mitzraim, this was already long, long forgotten. It was a statute which was once on the books perhaps 2 or 3 generations before. It existed once for 3 months when Moshe was born, eighty years ago. It had been abolished by the "Melech Chodosh", the new king. The people themselves had forgotten that their children had been killed. The statute of limitations had expired. They forgot to mention it in their prayers. The same applies today. From 1944 to 1979, people have forgotten Treblinka, Maidanek, etc. Everyone forgot. They mentioned only labor in their prayers. But, G-d didn't forget. The mind of the tortured becomes physically exhausted. It is hard to imagine but survivors of the death camps whose children were killed say, "If he or she had not been killed, they'd be around 50 now. Many people die at age of 50 anyway. The martyr's deaths were not mentioned in the prayers.

"Lachatz" - oppression. The element of "lachatz" is what tipped the balance in favor of Israel. What is decisive about "Lachatz" which is not in "onyanu" and "Vayanunu" etc? It means, "Action is imperative now." They had to spend there 400 years and were there but half the time. G-d accelerated it as much as possible. "It is now or never." There are pain thresholds of which some have high thresholds and some have low ones. The same applies to persecution thresholds. Some people may easily be shattered by persecution.

G-d had to act quickly because of the tremendous pressure for assimilation. They were severely threatened. Chazal says that "Yetzias Mitzraim" was as taking a baby from the mother's womb. It was now or goodbye. Otherwise, let us forget the promise to Abraham, the eschatological future, the messianic future. "But I cannot do it, I have already promised Abraham." Worthy or not, it must be. "The Jew can fall very low but can rise very high." It was declared by a philosopher we don't at all care for -- Zeresh, wife of Haman. "When Israel falls, it is as low as the ground, but when she rises it is up to the stars." Thus, the problem must quickly be resolved. Torah says, "Despite all of Israel's faults, it is still my child." She can rise as high as the sky.

From: Aish.com [newsletterserver@aish.com] Sent: Wednesday, April 05, 2006 1:28 PM Subject: Passover Cleaning Made Easy See this article online: www.aish.com/passlaw/passlawdefault/Passover_Cleaning_Made_Easy.asp

by Rabbi Yitzchak Berkowitz
Passover Cleaning Made Easy

Is Passover cleaning a chore? Find out what exactly you have to clean and what you don't. Plus with these handy tips, you'll actually enjoy it!

INTRODUCTION

G-d took the Jewish people out of Egypt in the springtime. The Talmud notes that G-d was very thoughtful. Not only was He interested in redeeming the nation, He wanted to do so at a time when the weather was just right. Not too hot, not too cold.

Everything about the Passover season is beautiful. The whole idea of re-doing your house -- your environment -- for the holiday should be a beautiful experience. For some reason, though, the burden of all that cleaning often hangs heavy over us, and as a result we lose much of the joy of Passover.

I'd like to not only make Passover cleaning a little easier, but above all to change the attitude once and for all to stop being frightened. Passover is not a monster. It's the most beautiful time of the year.

In order to change our attitudes, two things are necessary. The first is to know the halacha. There are so many Passover preparations that are done unnecessarily, where if you want to do them for extra credit, that's fine. But it's important to understand what is necessity and what is voluntary.

Secondly, there's practical advice. I want to share some tips that I've picked up over the years. Cleaning for Passover can actually be easy, there's lots of room for creativity, and it's fun.

THE OBLIGATION TO GET RID OF CHAMETZ

In cleaning for Passover, we are first and foremost fulfilling the mitzvah of biur chametz -- getting rid of chametz. Biur chametz is actually quite an easy mitzvah in terms of physical exertion. The Torah says: "tashbisu se'or mibateichem" -- make all your sour dough rest. The Torah commandment is that you can possess all the chametz you want, but in your mind it must be dust -- ownerless and valueless.

Now obviously we are dealing with something subtle and vague. What goes on in your mind, no one knows except you and God. It's quite easy to think you have considered everything "null and void," when in truth you can't wait for Passover to be over so you can partake of all those goodies!

So the Sages instituted a requirement to physically destroy chametz. This mitzvah is known as bedikat chametz. The Sages say it is not enough to emotionally write the chametz off as "dust"; you must actually search out any chametz you can find -- and physically destroy it.

WHEN TO SEARCH

The mitzvah of bedikat chametz is to be done on the night of the 14th of Nisan, the evening prior to the Seder. Why at night? Because in your home there are crevices and corners that have to be illuminated by artificial light -- and artificial light works best at night.

Why the 14th? The Sages said that if some people do it on the 12th and others on the 13th, you'd lose the power of the community reminding and encouraging each other. This way there is a set time; every Jew does bedikat chametz on the night of the 14th.

However, our homes over the years have grown in size, and consequently are more complicated to clean. As a result, the ability to do bedikat chametz in a few hours on the night of the 14th is no longer feasible. Even if you stay up all night, chances are there are parts of your home you'll never get to. So we start our bedikat chametz early. So realize that when you start cleaning for Passover, you are doing bedikat chametz. This is important because there are specific rules for bedikat chametz.

CLEANING DAY OR NIGHT

As we said, bedikat chametz must be done at night, because that's the only time that artificial light is effective. As a result, we have the following rule: You can inspect by daylight anything that does not need artificial light -- i.e. anything moveable that you can hold up near a window, or any part of the house that has sufficient daylight. (If you choose to add artificial light during the daytime, it doesn't hurt.)

On the other hand, any part of the house that needs artificial light -- e.g. closets, corners, insides of cabinets -- these places must be inspected at night. And make sure they are sufficiently lit.

The only time that you cannot do bedikat chametz altogether is in twilight. You don't have enough daylight, and yet it's not dark enough for the artificial light to be effective. Consequently, you could clean at twilight if it's convenient -- as long as you later inspect these cleaned areas (whether in daylight by day, or in artificial light at night).

WHAT ARE WE SEARCHING FOR?

What kind of chametz do we have to get rid of? And what is "chametz" anyway?

The Torah says: Lo yera'eh lecha chametz, velo year'eh lecha se'or bechol gevulecha - "neither chametz nor se'or shall be visible to you in all your boundaries." Chametz is defined as the result of grain that ferments. Se'or is sourdough -- highly fermented dough that is used to make another dough ferment. Instead of using yeast, what they did in the olden days (and many people do today as well) is to take a little piece of old dough, mix that with the fresh dough, and it causes the fresh dough to rise.

So chametz and se'or are the two things the Torah requires us to get rid of. But there's a difference between the two. Chametz is food. It's edible by human standards -- you'd serve it, you'd eat it. If a human being wouldn't eat it, then it's not chametz, because by definition chametz must be food. On the other hand, nobody eats se'or -- non-edible fermented grain which has the function of fermenting other dough.

There's a third category: Non-edible chametz that is not capable of fermenting other dough. That is neither chametz nor se'or. Halachically we call this "garbage" -- and it does not have to be gotten rid of for Passover. Similarly, the Talmud says that se'or which is so bad that even a dog wouldn't eat it -- i.e. it's poisonous -- is halachically not regarded as se'or and is therefore not a problem on Passover.

To review the three categories:

- 1) Chametz is food made of fermented grain.
- 2) Se'or is non-edible sourdough, which has the power to ferment other dough.
- 3) "Garbage" is something that is either incapable of fermenting other dough, or so totally non-edible that a dog wouldn't eat it.

DEODORANTS AND COSMETICS

Let's talk about different products we have around the house -- for example, deodorants and cosmetics which may very well contain some grain products. Of course, you're not going to eat it. Is it therefore automatically disqualified from the category of chametz? And what about se'or? Can deodorant be used to ferment another dough? It cannot, and consequently should not be se'or either.

Some years ago, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein came up with a unique approach that revolutionized the practical applications. He said that even if something in its present state is inedible, but if you can possibly distill it and produce edible chametz, then we would call that "chametz." As a result, he ruled that anything containing grain alcohol (ethyl alcohol) is considered chametz. Even though you would never dream of eating it, nevertheless if you distill it, it would turn into drinkable alcohol. (Ask any alcoholic -- in desperation, they may distill something poisonous like after-shave and drink it.) Therefore, any liquid cosmetic that has any form of grain alcohol is considered chametz and must be gotten rid of for Passover.

This idea only applies to liquids -- because you can't distill a solid. Therefore, any solid substance like stick deodorant or soap which is inedible (i.e. not chametz), and could not ferment a dough (i.e. not se'or), and cannot be distilled -- the halacha is you can own these solid substances on Passover, and you don't have to put them away. Technically, you could even use it on Passover, although the custom is not to use any stuff that has chametz in it as a cosmetic. That's why people buy soaps that are special "Kosher for Passover."

How about beer shampoo or liquid deodorant which contains no grain alcohol but has wheat germ in it. That's not chametz, because you wouldn't eat it. Can it ferment another dough? No. Can you distill it? No. (It's only alcohol that you can get by distilling; you won't get wheat germ vapor by distilling your deodorant.) Consequently, these things are not a problem. You're allowed to keep them around during Passover -- though again the custom is not to use them.

BREAD CRUMBS

What about bread crumbs on your kitchen floor? There are various opinions in halacha, but I'm going to present one in particular that is easier to understand.

We established that the third category -- "garbage" -- is defined as anything that cannot ferment another dough, and is so non-edible that even a dog wouldn't eat it.

According to most halachic authorities, there is one more substance that is defined as "garbage": Chametz that is smaller than a kezayit (about 30 grams) and you would not use it for anything. This is something most people call "garbage" -- you would easily throw it away and in your mind it's nothing. Crumbs fit into this category.

The only kind of crumb that's problematic is one you'd pick up with your finger and put on your tongue. So leftover crumbs from the table are in fact "chametz." Leftover crumbs on the floor, which you wouldn't eat, are garbage. Therefore, any crumb that you would consider dirt (and is smaller than a kezayit) does not have to be gotten rid of.

(The fact that a baby eats it does not turn it into chametz. Because when a baby decides to eat something, it is not a conscious decision that "this is food." If you have non-food around, a baby will eat that, too!)

A QUICK REVIEW

Before we go on, let's make sure we've got it all straight. When we do bedikat chametz, what are we looking for?

One crumb of edible chametz cannot remain in your house and you've got to destroy it. Also, anything that contains ethyl alcohol, since it can be distilled, is called "edible chametz" and must also be disposed of.

We are also looking for something that is more than a kezayit -- regardless of whether you would consider it food or not. If it's less than a kezayit of non-edible chametz, you don't have to get rid of it because you consider it dirt. Also, if it's something even a dog wouldn't eat, then even more than a kezayit is not problematic.

When you're cleaning for Passover, all the goodies in your freezer and cabinets -- bread, cakes, crackers -- all of that is chametz. You have to get rid of it one way or another. But aside from that, you probably won't find much edible chametz in your house. Bedikat chametz, therefore, is not so difficult. In the bedrooms, for example, you don't have to sit with a pin scraping the corners!

Even further: Let's say you have gook stuck to your chametz dishes. If the stuff is non-edible, then you can forget about it -- as long as it does not total a kezayit of gook. But there is no need sit there and scrub the dishes with steel wool. Just make sure there is no edible stuff on them, and no kezayit of gook -- and put them away.

One important point: If you feel like going beyond the limit and scraping the walls and ceiling, go right ahead. Of course it's not required, but the halacha is actually stated in Shulchan Aruch that no one is allowed to laugh at you. In the words of the rabbis, Yisrael kedoshim heim -- "Jews are holy" when they go beyond the letter of the law.

Be careful, however, not to go so far that you develop an antagonistic attitude toward Passover. If all this extra, non-required cleaning is going to make you dread the holiday, then forget about it. And certainly you should not clean so much that

you're exhausted for the Passover Seder. Part of being "holy" is appreciating the holiday, too!

THE PROHIBITION OF EATING CHAMETZ

Besides the mitzvah of bedikat chametz, there is a second, more time-consuming aspect of cleaning for Passover. And that revolves around the Torah prohibition of eating any chametz on Passover. In fact, if you intentionally eat even one molecule of chametz on Passover, you're breaking a Torah prohibition.

Furthermore, when it came to Passover, the Sages built "fence around fence." They prohibited things on Passover that we would not otherwise dream of.

Case #1: The Sages said that if one crumb of chametz falls into a huge pot of chicken soup, then -- even if the crumb was removed -- that negligible bit of "bread taste" will still render the whole mixture "chametz."

Case #2: All year long, we know that you're not supposed to use non-kosher dishes or pots. But what if you accidentally use a dish that was used for non-kosher food a long time ago (i.e. not within 24 hours)? The halacha is that your food is still kosher. There are some exceptions, but generally speaking, an "old taste" absorbed into a pot will not ruin your food. However, on Passover, the Sages said that if a dish or pot was ever once used for chametz in its whole long history, and then was used on Passover, the old chametz taste absorbed into the pot will wake up again and give your food the status of chametz.

This rule applies during Passover itself. But if case #2 occurred before Passover -- i.e. if the pot was used ages ago for chametz and you mistakenly cook food in it before Passover -- then the halacha is that your food remains kosher.

With regard to case #1, however, the Sages said that if there may be the tiniest trace of chametz still in your food -- even if it happened before Passover -- the halacha is that your food is considered chametz. (Note: This applies for Ashkenazim.)

As a result, we need special "Kosher for Passover" everything -- pots, pans and even all the ingredients we cook with. Plus, we have to be extremely careful with what's around the house, particularly in the kitchen. If there's any bit of chametz that may make its way into our food, then we've got to get rid of that. And unlike the rules of bedikat chametz, it makes no difference whether there is more or less than a kezayit. Plus we have to make sure that any place that "hot" Passover food will touch (like a countertop) doesn't even have an absorbed chametz taste.

One exception to this rule: Totally non-edible chametz that makes its way into your food is not called chametz and will not ruin your food -- unless you purposely eat it. If it accidentally falls into your food that's not a problem. (However, as we said, if it's edible chametz, then even the tiniest drop in your food will ruin everything.)

CLOTHES

In preventing chametz from coming in contact with food, let's start with some things you'd never think of. Any clothes that you're going to wear to the Passover table, if it has a speck of chametz that may fall into your food, then you've got to get that speck off your clothes before coming to the table.

As a result, when cleaning your clothes closet for Passover, you should select the clothing you plan to wear for Passover -- and these clothes have to be 100 percent clean. Put them in the laundry, send them to the dry cleaners, or at the very least brush them out well to make sure there is no chametz whatsoever.

What about the clothes you're not going to wear during Passover? Just take a quick look, empty the pockets to make sure there's no edible chametz, and put them away. Don't worry about specks.

With regard to closets, try to keep your Passover clothes off the closet floor. And with regard to bed linens, be aware that during Passover you may get up in the middle of the night and walk to the kitchen. So be sure to change the sheets and blanket covers as close to Passover as possible.

CHILDREN'S TOYS

It's best if children's toys do not come to the table on Passover, but that's wishful thinking. In reality, you never know when toys are going to come in contact with food. As a result, we do the following: First, take the toys that are complicated to clean and put them away. Don't even attempt to clean them for Passover. Just make sure there's no edible chametz on them, or a kezayit of non-edible chametz. That should take a total of two minutes. As far as selling the toys is concerned, the text of the sale document includes any chametz you've got around the house, so you don't need to specify toys; it's covered by the contract anyway.

As for toys that are going to be used on Passover, make sure they are washable. For small pieces, fill up a pillow case and put it in the washing machine. (Make sure to tie it tight or you may ruin your washing machine.) Another option is to put the toys in the bathtub. Let them soak, and give them a quick rinse under pressure. You don't need anything more than that. It's not necessary to wash the toys with ammonia. What about a bicycle? Make sure there's no real chametz on it, and then it can be used during Passover. But the bike should not be ridden around the house on Passover -- because once it's been ridden outside, there's bits of chametz all over the street that gets caught on the tires.

Some people have special Passover toys, and this is good practical advice. Children are fascinated by playing with toys they haven't seen in a year. Even if you have some other toys that you wash, breaking out new toys is a great way to keep children occupied in those days just before Passover when you're busy cooking and preparing.

BOOKS

Any book that will be brought to the table on Passover must be 100 percent clean. How do you do that? It is almost impossible. That's why any books you are going to bring to the Passover table -- like a Haggadah -- should be kept wrapped in plastic or put away all year long so that it is 100 percent chametz-free. If you want to study the Haggadah before Passover, then get a different one which will be your "chametz Haggadah."

As for books that will not be brought to the Passover table, all you have to do is make sure they have no edible chametz or a kezayit of gook. You may have some edible crumbs there, so turn each book upside down and bang it out. That's sufficient to assume that no edible chametz remains.

DINING ROOM - LIVING ROOM

Things in your dining room may certainly come in contact with food.

Table: The table itself will need to be kosher because you put hot food down on it. Of course, this is not always so practical to clean -- even though you can kasher wood by dousing it in boiling water, you don't want to do that to your fine wood table. Besides, tables usually have hard-to-reach crevasses that can be filled with crumbs.

What should you do? Cover the table with something waterproof. Otherwise, if you put a hot dish down on your table, the moisture will penetrate your tablecloth, creating a direct line of moisture going from the table to your food -- making your food chametz! So the table must have a waterproof layer -- either plastic over the tablecloth, or the tablecloth over plastic. If you prefer, corrugated cardboard works, too, because it's so thick that we assume there will not be a direct line of moisture going from your food all the way down to the table. Of course you also have to clean the entire table. You don't have to sit there with a toothpick picking out chametz stuck in a crevasse of the legs. But make sure there's nothing loose that can fall onto the floor and eventually make its way back onto your table on Passover.

Chairs: If you have upholstery, you have to clean that very well. It's best to shampoo the furniture if you can do so without ruining it. If there is a removable part to your chair, check there and you're certain to find lots of crumbs. Check carefully, because chairs get moved up and down, and some crumbs may come off onto someone's clothing and then into the food on Passover.

Couch: Remove the cushions and check there. It is common to find a kezayit of chametz stuck inside the couch. Also clean in any cracks or crevasses. A vacuum cleaner works best for this.

Light switches: Since you often touch light switches during the meal, make sure they're perfectly clean. It is sufficient to dampen a cloth with ammonia or any strong cleanser, and go over the switch once so that nothing edible is left there.

Doorknobs: Again, use a damp cloth with cleanser. However, this is not enough if you've got a fancy doorknob with crevasses. In that case you should use a cloth that's more saturated, so any chametz that may remain will be totally non-edible.

KITCHEN BASICS

There are surfaces in the kitchen that will not touch your food, but that may come in contact with food indirectly -- because you touch them while you make food. Examples include doorknobs, doors, windows, cabinet covers, radio, and especially the telephone. These surfaces must be perfectly clean, or at least nothing edible should be left on it. Use ammonia or a strong cleanser. (Window cleaner contains ammonia.) If you can unscrew part of the telephone, it's a good idea, because you never know how many crumbs are in there.

Some items in your kitchen are on even a lower level. This is the category of things that you are going to put away in storage -- e.g. your chametz dishes. All you have to do is make sure there's no edible chametz and no kezayit of gook -- then put them away in a cabinet which is closed shut, then taped, locked or labeled. This way you won't accidentally take it out during Passover.

What about chametz dishes that are used only for special occasions -- e.g. a breakfront where you have china and crystal on display? These you can continue having on display. Since you don't take these out regularly, there's no danger of you accidentally taking it out during Passover. (Additionally, there is no Passover prohibition of owning the "taste" of chametz absorbed in a plate.) People may feel uncomfortable about leaving these dishes on display, and of course it's perfectly acceptable to put them away. But the halacha is that you are allowed to leave them out.

Speaking of discomfort... On Passover, some people will cover up a piece of artwork that shows bread. Certainly there's no requirement to do so, but you can appreciate someone not wanting to have a picture of challah hanging next to their Passover table!

UTENSILS USED IN COOKING

Now we get to the surfaces that will actually come in contact with your food. The most obvious example is pots and pans. Of these, the most severe category is those things used on the fire without liquid -- e.g. a frying pan. If you want to use this pan for Passover, you'll have to burn the chametz out. This is called libun, literally getting the metal red-hot. You basically have two choices: use a blowtorch, or a self-cleaning oven. (Just be careful that the plastic handle doesn't disintegrate.)

What about pots that are used on the fire with water -- e.g. your spaghetti pot, or utensils that were used with hot food -- e.g. silverware? If you want to use this for Passover, then you have to boil it completely. This is called haggalah.

How do you do haggalah? First, make sure the item is completely clean. Then, fill up a big, big pot with water. Get it boiling, and then completely immerse whatever you want to kasher in the water. Since the item will cool the water somewhat, you have to leave it in there long enough so that the water reaches a boil again. The optimum time is to leave it in for 30 seconds, and then remove the item. If you leave it in any longer, there's a problem of re-absorbing some of the chametz. Thirty seconds is ideal.

Haggalah becomes a bit more complicated if the item you want to kasher is a big pot. What can you immerse that in?! One option is to fill the pot to the very top with water, then bring it to a boil, and finally throw something in so the water boils over the sides.

The other option is to call your local synagogue and see if they offer a "kashering day." This is where they prepare a huge public vat of boiling water. Just make sure that whoever is dipping your pots is patient enough to leave it in for the requisite 30 seconds. The custom is not to kasher anything that was used for chametz within 24 hours. And generally speaking, people today try to have a separate set of pots and silverware for Passover. If you can afford it, it certainly simplifies things.

THE CANDLESTICKS STRINGENCY

There is another level which is a stringency for Passover. The Ashkenazi custom is that anything that came to the table during the year cannot be brought to the Passover table, unless you kasher it first. That includes items that have only come in contact with cold chametz during the year, like a Kiddush cup. Generally there's no "chametz taste" absorbed in that, because the medium of heat is necessary to infuse a taste. Nevertheless, if you want to use the Kiddush cup on Passover, you must kasher it in boiling water. The same applies to candlesticks if they've been brought to the table.

There is one leniency here, however: it's enough to just pour boiling water over them (as opposed to the regular immersion). But don't forget -- if the Kiddush cup is a fancy silver one with a lot of crevasses, you have to clean it well with silver polish before koshering. If you can't get it fully clean, then it's best to use a different one for Passover.

To review: Anything that you cook in needs to be immersed in boiling water. (Though the custom is to have a separate set for Passover anyway.) Whereas anything that you do not cook in -- but came to your table during the year -- needs boiling water poured over it.

STOVE GRATES

Surprisingly, you don't really have to kasher stove grates. This applies all year as well. For example, if some meat juice spills on your stove grate, and then some milk spills there -- it's still kosher. Why? Because since the grate is constantly over the fire, any spill is regarded as burned up before the taste can become absorbed into the grate.

For Passover, we make the same assumption -- i.e. any chametz was burned up before its taste became absorbed. However, the Ashkenazi custom is still to kasher the grates. We use a "light" form of "burning out" called libun kal. Practically speaking, you heat up the grate until it is so hot that if a piece of paper touched it, it would turn brown. The easiest way to do this is to heat up your oven, stick in the grates, and that will be sufficient. Or, you can turn on a few burners, and put your Shabbos blech right on top of the grates. (Don't turn on all four burners, because with the blech there is not enough oxygen and the fires will go out. Instead, turn on two diagonal ones, then do the other two on the other side.) In either case, be sure the grate is hot enough so that a piece of paper touching it would turn brown.

KITCHEN COUNTERTOPS

Stainless steel counters can be kashered. First, make sure they've not been used for hot chametz in the past 24 hours. Then, clean them well. And finally, pour boiling water from a kettle all over them.

The problem is this is a really messy job and you may have to fill up lots of kettles. So one alternative is to put cold water all over your counter (put something on the side so the water doesn't spill over), then take an electric steam iron, and go over the entire countertop. This will make the water "sizzle," which is the halachic equivalent of using a red-hot stone -- eh'ven meluban. (Don't worry, a steam iron is waterproof and this will not ruin your iron.) But remember -- this only works on stainless steel counters.

What if you have stone or marble counters? That depends on the type of stone. In Israel, most people have what is called shayish. This is a combination of stone and

epoxy -- and cannot be kashered for Passover. You have to cover it with something waterproof. And although it's not required, some people pouring boiling water over it before covering it properly.

If you have what they call "granite," that is real stone and can be kashered for Passover. (Use the methods described above for stainless steel.) The only problem spot is the seams where you have a little crack filled with plaster. Some people put rubber mats over their granite (even if they do kasher it) just to cover these seams. But halachically, if you pour boiling water there, it should be sufficient.

What about the wall behind the countertops? Since your pots touch the wall during the year, make sure to cover it. It doesn't make a difference what the wall is made of, you should cover the wall behind the counter.

Additionally, you should cover the underside of the upper cabinets that overhang the counter. Why? Because some Passover food may touch it. But beyond this, there is steam that can go up and absorb the taste of chametz steam that was absorbed there. Not everyone agrees, but I believe that surface should be covered.

As for the outside of the cabinets themselves, we assume that food will not touch there directly. But make sure you clean them well.

As for the kitchen table, it is the same as we said for the dining room table: cover it with something waterproof. If your tabletop is made of wood, metal or stone, you could pour boiling water from a kettle directly onto your table, and that would actually enable you to use the table without any covering. This method does not work for formica.

REFRIGERATOR

Most people generally don't put hot food directly into the refrigerator. But if you do during the year, don't do it on Passover!

The basic rule with a refrigerator is the same as doorknobs: It must be cleaned spotlessly. First take out the shelves, then clean the entire inside very well with something that renders food non-edible. It may be a little difficult to bend in there, but the surface itself is smooth and not too hard to clean.

What about the shelves themselves? If you try going over every surface by hand -- in between the little slats -- it's going to take forever. So the best thing is to fill the bathtub about halfway with water, add some ammonia, and put all the shelves in there. Wash them off under pressure, and make sure that nothing edible remains.

Although this is sufficient, some people still feel uncomfortable putting Passover food directly down onto the shelves. You can cover the shelves, but be careful: If you cover them with something that air cannot go through, then there will be no circulation in the refrigerator, the thermostat will get confused and the motor will run forever. You can kill your fridge that way! Instead, cover the shelves with something that air can circulate through -- like paper towels or aluminum foil poked with holes.

As for the freezer, defrost it and clean it out thoroughly. If you have a self-defrosting freezer, make sure to pull out the water pan at the bottom. If you haven't cleaned that pan out lately, there could easily be a kezayit of crumbs down there!

Next: the rubber gasket around your refrigerator door. Obviously clean it well with a cloth. But more important, you need to clean the accordion folds. The most effective way is take a Q-tip, dip it into ammonia (or windex), and run it through the folds. The Q-tip will do a great job of picking up all the dirt.

What about food that you want to leave in your refrigerator (or freezer) and include in the sale of chametz? You should wrap it up, put it in a corner of your refrigerator (or freezer) and then cover it to avoid any contact on Passover.

For the outside of the refrigerator, make sure to clean the door and handles, because you're going to be touching that frequently during Passover. Also check on top of the refrigerator, especially if there are kids in the house. Who knows what may have gotten tossed up there! As for the exterior sides, just clean them well. Some people like to cover them, but the halacha does not require it.

KITCHEN CABINETS

We already spoke about the outside of kitchen cabinets. But what about the inside shelves? Since you normally don't put hot food there, you don't have to use boiling water. Just clean it very well with detergent and make sure there's nothing edible left.

Still, many people feel uncomfortable putting Passover dishes and food down on surfaces that are used for chametz all year long. This is the source of the "ancient Jewish custom" of shelf paper. Many people put shelf paper on the bottom of drawers and cabinets, and some put it on the sides as well.

KITCHEN SINK

The sink obviously has to be kosher for Passover. A stainless steel sink can be kashered by dousing it with boiling water. However, the drain itself has a seam that you can't really get perfectly clean. One solution is to clean the stainless steel sink by blasting it with a blowtorch. However, most halachic authorities maintain that blowtorching is not necessary, and it is sufficient to pour strong detergent down your drain. This way, anything that is stuck -- either on the seam of the drain or in the drain pipe itself -- will be rendered totally non-edible. If you have plastic pipes, drain cleaner may disintegrate plastic pipes, so strong detergent is good enough. Additionally (although this is not really necessary), some people put a plastic insert or rubber mat in the sink so that nothing touches the sink itself.

A porcelain sink cannot be kashered. You must clean the sink thoroughly and then put a plastic insert. But sometimes your sink can back up with water, and you can end up getting drain water coming onto the plastic insert! This obviously defeats the whole purpose. The key is to remove the strainer from the drain in your sink, and instead to put a strainer securely in the insert. This way, all the dirt will get stuck on top, which you can clean out, and if anything goes through, it will go all the way down and not stay in the sink.

Furthermore, the insert should be slightly raised, not sitting directly on top of the sink. You can put two little pieces of wood in the sink, which the insert will sit on -- as long as it's slightly removed and not touching directly.

What about lining a sink with contact paper? The problem is that you may get a water bubble inside it, and then that water would transmit taste from your non-Passover sink. If you can be sure that there is no water under the contact paper, then contact paper is okay.

While we're on the subject of the sink, don't forget the faucet itself. The handles should be cleaned perfectly. Some people actually have different handles for Passover. If you don't feel like unscrewing them, at least wash them in detergent to render any particles non-edible. With regard to the faucet itself, you have to pour boiling water on it because it comes in contact with chametz steam all the time.

A plastic faucet is a very big problem because it cannot be kashered. So you will have to keep the faucet moved to the side during Passover, and keep it away from your pots, to make sure that no steam comes on it.

DISHWASHING ON PASSOVER

In order to avoid all sorts of problems in your sink, don't wash dishes in very hot water on Passover. This will avoid getting any residual chametz to a point where it can cook. (The halachic cooking point is called yad soledet bo -- literally "too hot to the touch" -- which is 45 degrees Celsius, 112 degrees Fahrenheit.) It's not forbidden to wash with very hot water, but it's a way to avoid many problems. You can get your dishes just as clean by using very warm water that's not too hot. This caution is only necessary on Passover.

THE OVEN

Our final appliance is the oven. If you have a self-cleaning oven, put it through the self-cleaning cycle and that will make your oven "Kosher for Passover." In a self-cleaning oven, if you have any interior parts that are rubber -- or other substances which halachically cannot be kashered -- then you should cover those pieces with aluminum foil, and make sure they stay covered whenever you use your oven.

If you do not plan to use your oven during Passover, all you have to do is look inside: If there is no edible food inside and no kezayit of gook, just close the door, tape it shut, and that's all. If you want to be stringent, spray some oven cleaner inside, wait three minutes, wipe it off, and close the door. Halachically, if you're not using your oven on Passover, it does not have to shine. Please don't make anyone scrub your oven for hours because of a stringency! Simply make sure there's no edible chametz and no kezayit of gook.

If you never use your oven for chametz and you want to use it for Passover, you still have to kasher it. However, here you can rely on turning on the thermostat to the highest setting and waiting until it reaches its highest temperature.

What about the top of the stove, where the burners sit? We already discussed how to kasher the stove grates -- they need libun kal, which means they get hot enough to turn a piece of paper brown. The same rule applies to the burners that the fire comes out of -- just clean them well, and then turn them on to make sure you burn out any food.

The top of the stove, however, is a different story. In reality, that surface is always treif, because it gets splashes of milk and splashes of meat. During the year, this is not a problem. Why? Because first of all, you're careful that those splashes don't touch what you're cooking. And if it does, then it all depends on whether the splashes are "edible food," and what the proportion is, etc. Furthermore, if your stovetop is cleaned, then the only problem is that it has absorbed milk and meat "taste" -- which we assume happened more than 24 hours ago. So during the year, it's very unlikely that these splashes can render your food "non-kosher."

On Passover, however, the 24-hour leniency doesn't apply. Something that was used for chametz a year ago is still chametz. Consequently, Passover food cannot touch your stovetop and it must be covered. The easiest way is to take aluminum foil and cover the whole stove top. Use the heavy-duty kind so it doesn't tear.

The most problematic part of your stove is a part you may have never seen: under the top platform. If you remove that, you will find remnants of all the different cereals and soups you cooked during the year. There may likely be some edible crumbs there, as well as a kezayit of gook. So you have to remove the entire stovetop. Hopefully, you have one that's removable (perhaps with screws). Otherwise it means getting under there with your fingers. That is very difficult, and the only advice is to pry it open and then spray some ammonia detergent to make everything non-edible.

Assuming you've removed the stovetop, the first thing is to get a vacuum cleaner and get rid of all the crumbs. This way, you won't have crumbs flying all over the

place. If you don't have access to a vacuum, then take a damp cloth and go over the area. The crumbs will stick to the cloth. Don't make the cloth wet, because that will make a mess of your whole oven. This is necessary even if you're not going to use your stove on Passover.

If your stove is built into the counter, the top is generally not a problem, because spills have no place to fall into.

Other stoves are more problematic. If you have one big glass or porcelain top with heating elements under it, then kashering that for Passover (because of the material) is not possible. The only thing you could do is to cover it with aluminum foil, but the problem is that when you cover these things, they don't work as well. Unless you can find a way of covering it without losing efficiency or ruining your food, the best solution may be to get a different stove for Passover.

If you have electric elements that are exposed, then the elements have to be cleaned but not kashered.

An electric warming tray (plata) should be cleaned as well as possible. And if you want to use it for Passover, cover it over with heavy-duty aluminum foil that won't tear. A metal burner cover (blech) has to be either kashered or totally covered. It makes more sense to buy a thin blech especially for Passover; otherwise heavy-duty aluminum foil should suffice, although it may emit harmful and unpleasant fumes.

Some stoves have a cover that you can put down when not using your stovetop. Since this gets splashed all year long, you must clean and cover it (or else detach it completely). Similarly, the wall behind your stove has definitely absorbed some chametz -- so either move the stove away from the wall so no pots will touch it, or cover the wall.

If you have a ventilator above your oven, that's a problem -- a breeding ground for chametz steam and particles. The best thing is to cover the vent and don't use it during Passover. Additionally, if there's anything edible in there (or a kezayit of gook), you have to clean it out.

MICROWAVE AND DISHWASHER

A microwave itself can be kashered for Passover, providing that the inside is metal (or even painted metal). Simply insert a bowl of water and have it make a lot of steam for 20 minutes. It's preferable that you get a new glass plate for Passover, or at least cover it.

If you have different parts in the microwave -- like little rubber pieces -- this is a big problem. First of all, rubber is a substance that can't be kashered. And secondly, since this is a microwave, the pieces obviously can't be covered with tinfoil. The best solution is to get replacement parts and save those for Passover only. Otherwise, you can't use your microwave for Passover.

A microwave with a plastic interior cannot be kashered for Passover.

In order to kasher a dishwasher for Passover, it must be metal. Additionally, you should have a separate rack for Passover.

SMALL KITCHEN APPLIANCES

There are other appliances that we do not use on Passover. These include a toaster, toaster oven, and mixer -- things that you use for bread and cake all year long. Although it may be possible to kasher these things, it's just going a little too far and we don't do so.

So what do you do? First of all, if you think there's anything edible, clean it. Take the crumbs out of your toaster and toaster oven. Do the best you can, but don't go crazy. You don't have to take apart your toaster, toaster oven or mixer.

The reason you don't have to be as careful cleaning these items is that you're going to include them in your sale of chametz anyway. So even though we have a custom not to sell chametz gamur (i.e. bread and cake), there is no problem of selling a toaster that has some crumbs left in it. Just remove whatever chametz you can, and whatever you can't reach, rely on the sale.

As for your mixer: If you're afraid it has a bunch of dough still attached, it's probably not edible. In which case just make sure you don't have a kezayit. The best way to solve all this is to wash it with detergent which makes it totally non-edible.

THE FLOOR

Crumbs on the floor, assuming they're less than a kezayit, are regarded as dirt. The problem, however, is that clothes fall on the floor, children play on the floor, etc. So to minimize problems in general, try to keep the floors fairly tidy during the days you're cleaning for Passover. And then, as the final step when everything else in the house has been kashered for Passover, wash the floors very well. (You don't have to use ammonia.)

What about during Passover itself? Realize that every time anyone enters the house from outside, they're carrying many potential chametz particles on their clothes, and particularly their shoes. You can keep sweeping your house, but that won't do a perfect job.

So the rule is: Anything that falls on the floor during Passover does not go back on the table. The original custom was that it didn't go back on the table at all for the duration of Passover. Today, we're lenient to permit washing it off. For instance, if a piece of silverware falls on the floor, just wash it off and then you can use it again.

The same with toys -- if a child wants to bring it to the table, it must first be washed off.

With about rugs? They're full of crumbs -- even edible crumbs -- and they're very difficult to clean. The best option is to shampoo the carpet before Passover, which will eliminate anything edible. Otherwise, many people just roll their carpets up, put them away, and sell them for Passover. This is not required, but is certainly advisable (unless you're shampooing).

One crucial thing to remember: You spend your whole time cleaning for Passover, and where does all your chametz go? It gets stuck in the broom, goes into the garbage can, and into the vacuum cleaner bag. You must clean your broom well, so that there's nothing edible left in it. Or preferably have a special broom for Passover that you put away from year to year. Make sure your garbage can is cleaned well. And above all, make sure to throw out the vacuum cleaner bag. That's one instance where you're likely to have a whole kezayit of chametz gook together!

SALE OF CHAMETZ

The prevailing custom is not to sell real edible chametz like bread, crackers, etc. The exception is when getting rid of it will involve a hardship -- i.e. you've got a large quantity of it, it's difficult to obtain, or it's expensive. Certainly you can include a half-bottle of scotch in the sale. Otherwise, you can give the food away to a non-Jewish acquaintance. Some cities specifically host food drives for poor people in the days before Passover.

But what about food that's not "real" chametz -- i.e. a can of tuna fish that's not labeled "Kosher for Passover," or food that was cooked in a chametz pot? These things you can put away in a cabinet and sell them. Taping the cabinet closed is only necessary if out of habit you may open it on Passover. By the way, even chametz of a non-Jew must be put away and covered.

Have a happy and kosher Passover -- and an easy cleaning!

This article can also be read at: http://www.aish.com/passlaw/passlawdefault/Passover_Cleaning_Made_Easy.asp

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Rabbi Frand on Parshas Tzav Rabbi Yissocher Frand
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The Korban Olah Teaches A Fundamental Lesson in Fundraising

Parshas Tzav begins with a peculiar conjugation of the word meaning "command" (tzav). Rashi notes that this particular form of the verb "tzeevah" connotes particular zirus [urging on], both for the immediate moment and for future generations. Rashi quotes the Tanna Rabbi Shimon, who says that it is particularly necessary for the Torah to urge someone on in a situation where there is a loss of money.

The Torah is speaking of the laws of the Olah sacrifice. An Olah is an animal that is totally consumed on the altar. Even though the owner does not partake of a Korban Chatas [sin offering] either, at least the Kohanim who offer it do eat from that offering. The owner eats the lion's share of the meat of the Korban Shlamim [peace offering]. However, the entire Korban Olah is placed on the altar and it is totally burnt to ashes. Therefore, it is described as an offering "involving the loss of money." Both the owners and the Kohanim see their money and their efforts literally going up in smoke when an Olah is offered. All they get out of it, in a physical sense, is ashes. For this reason, there was a special need to charge and motivate the people to keep the laws associated with the Olah offering.

It would seem that there are many mitzvos in the Torah that involve "loss of money" (chisoron kis). Observing Pesach requires spending money, and yet we do not find the word "Tzav" written in conjunction with the

observance of Pesach. Succos is not inexpensive either. Being a Jew is an expensive proposition. One has to wonder -- what do the non-Jews do with their money? They don't have Yeshiva tuition, they don't have Pesach, and they don't have Succos! No wonder the professional sports teams are able to sell so many season tickets!

If, by definition, so many mitzvos involve "chisoron kis", why does Rashi place so much emphasis on the "chisoron kis" of the Olah sacrifice?

The answer is that there are different gradations of "chisoron kis". True, it costs a lot of money to buy Matzah and to buy Esrogim, but it is easier to accept that type of expense. He gets something for his money. He can relate to the expense he has undergone. He can sit and eat the matzah. Granted, under normal circumstances he would not pay \$15 a pound for something that sometimes tastes like cardboard. But now that the Torah gave us the mitzvah, we sit down and we eat the matzah that cost us so much money, and we enjoy it!

A good pair of Tefillin today easily costs several hundred dollars. This is a big expense. But at least I have Tefillin. I look at them. I wear them every day. I get psychological pleasure from having these expensive ritual items in my possession.

But a Korban Olah is different. A person buys a bull or a cow. This can cost hundreds of dollars. What does he do with it? He watches it being burnt. No one gets any benefit from it. The money goes up in smoke! This is "chisoron kis". That is why people have to be encouraged and be given a special charge when it comes to such a mitzvah.

It is hard to take money from people and not give them anything in return. Herein lies a fundamental lesson in fund-raising. Whenever a person wants to raise money, what does the person have to do? Build a building. Why is that necessary? So that he can approach a wealthy individual and tell him "Listen, your name will be on the side of the building." The institution is giving him something in return. Then, making a big donation will not seem like a "chisoron kis".

As long as people can see the building, or the water fountain, or the plaque -- as long as they can see "something" -- they feel that they are getting something for their donation. It is far harder to raise money just in order to improve the salaries of teachers or to be able to reduce the cost of tuition. In such fund-raising campaigns the donors do not feel the same sense of "getting something for their money." That kind of donation involves "chisoron kis". Whenever people don't see a tangible return, special urging is required -- both immediately and for future generations.

Today's Service Is The Same As Yesterday's Service

We read at the beginning of the Parsha the mitzvah known as Terumas HaDeshen: "The Kohen shall don his fitted linen Tunic, and he shall don linen Pants on his flesh, he shall raise the ashes which the fire will consume of the Olah-offering on the Altar, and place it next to the Altar." [Vayikra 1:3]

Before the Kohen would start the daily service, he would go to the place where the Olahs were burnt and scoop up a handful of ashes. He placed this handful of ashes next to the Altar. This ritual of Terumas HaDeshen [lifting the ashes] is not to be confused with another ritual -- Hotza'as HaDeshen [removal of the ashes]. This other ritual is mentioned in the very next pasuk: "He shall remove his garments and he shall wear other garments and he shall REMOVE the ashes to the outside of the camp, to a pure place." [Vayikra 1:4] Hotza'as HaDeshen is merely "clean-up". Terumas HaDeshen is part of the Avodah [Temple Service].

What is the symbolism of this Avodah? What is the symbolism of the fact that every single morning, the first thing the Kohen did was gathering the ashes from the previous day's offerings and placing them next to the altar for today's offerings?

Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch says something here that is strikingly beautiful. I quote (from the English translation of Hirsch's original German commentary): "The Jewish today has to take its mission from the hand of its yesterday." This means, we have to bind today's Avodah [Divine

Service] with yesterday's Avodah. This is because yesterday's Avodah and today's Avodah are the same Avodah. In Judaism, there is no such thing as "Oh that was yesterday's challenge. Today is something different."

No. Today is the same Avodah as yesterday. As Rav Hirsch explains "The very last Jewish grandchild stands there before G-d with the same mission of life that his first ancestor bore." Avraham Avinu, the first Jew has the exact same mission as the "last Jew." It hasn't changed in 4,000 years.

Each day's service must be done with a freshness and exuberance. Each day, they should be in our eyes "AS IF they were new." But, in the final analysis, it is the same thing.

Such a message has no resonance today. Politicians always speak of the "new era", the "fresh start", "new challenges", and "new approaches." The common attitude is that what worked in the past, won't work now. This is not the Jewish approach.

Of course, each generation does have its own challenges. But the basic mission and the basic message do not change. The Avodah is the same as it was yesterday. The first thing the Kohen does to start today's service is to remember that it is the same thing that he did yesterday and the same thing that he will do tomorrow.

There is a principle in the Sacrificial Service, that once a mitzvah has been completed (na'asis mitzvava), the prohibition of meilah (trespassing sacred property), no longer applies. Despite this principle, the Terumas HaDeshen is an exception. After the ashes are lifted and placed next to the mizbayach (ostensibly completing the mitzvah), the law of meilah still applies. The explanation is: just PLACING the ashes there does not complete the mitzvah. The ashes' BEING there is the mitzvah. This fits in with the symbolism we mentioned. The ashes need to remain in that place for every one to see in order to serve the purpose of demonstrating this continuity of the Divine Service.

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**May We Use Grape Juice for the Arba Kosot? –
by Rabbi Chaim Jachter
Part One**

In preparation for Pesach, we wish to address whether we are permitted to use grape juice for the Arba Kosot at the Seder. In order to properly discuss this issue, we first must first examine the question of whether grape juice is acceptable for Kiddush. We must also review the question as to whether grape juice made from concentrate is acceptable for Kiddush. We base much of the following three articles on a seminar conducted by the Orthodox Union at the Young Israel of Flatbush a number of years ago that addressed many issues regarding the Halachot of grape juice and wine.

Bava Batra 97a The question as to whether one may use grape juice for Kiddush would appear to be simply resolved by a passage in Bava Batra 97b that states, "One may squeeze a cluster of grapes [before Shabbat] and recite Kiddush on it." The Gemara even explicitly states that it is permissible Lechatchilah to use this product for Kiddush (also see Nazir 38b and Tosafot ad. loc. s.v. Achal). The question, though, is a bit more complicated, because grape juice that is commercially available in our times is often cooked or at least pasteurized. We must consider two classic issues before proceeding to the contemporary issue of using grape juice for Kiddush. We must review the debate as to whether one recites Borei Pri HaGefen on cooked wine (Yayin Mevushal) and whether Kiddush may be recited on such wine.

The Berachah on Yayin Mevushal We recite Shehakol on most juices because Chazal (Berachot 38a) consider them to constitute "mere sweat" (Zeiah BeAlma) and undeserving of a more specific Berachah. Wine, on the other hand, merits its special Berachah of Borei Pri HaGefen because its status has been upgraded (Ishtani Lelluya; see Berachot 35b).

Rashi and the Rash (cited in Tosafot Bava Batra 97a s.v. Ilaima) believe that one should recite Shehakol upon Yayin Mevushal, cooked wine, since cooking downgrades its quality and reverses the wine's original status upgrade. For Rashi and the Rash, Yayin Mevushal is of equal status to orange or pineapple juice and thus merits only a Berachah of Shehakol. (Berachot 38b serves as somewhat of a basis for their assertion.) Tosafot (ibid.) and most other Rishonim (cited in the Beit Yosef Orach Chaim 272 s.v. VeAl Yayin Mevushal and the Encyclopedia Talmudit 4:457-458) rule that we recite Borei Pri HaGefen even on Yayin Mevushal. Tosafot cite the Talmud Yerushalmi (Pesachim 10:1) that permits Yayin Mevushal for the Arba Kosot as support for their contention. The Rosh (Bava Batra 6:10 and cited in the Beit Yosef ad. loc.) explains that Yayin Mevushal retains its upgraded status. This is especially true today, when only wine connoisseurs can discern the difference in quality between uncooked wine and Yayin Mevushal, which is heated only a very brief time (see Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1:25). The Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 202:1) rules unequivocally that one recites Borei Pri HaGefen upon Yayin Mevushal. A dissenting opinion is not even cited, demonstrating that Tosafot's opinion has been accepted as normative regarding this issue (as noted by the Mishna Berurah 272:23).

Kiddush on Yayin Mevushal The aforementioned Tosafot and Rosh also permit reciting Kiddush upon Yayin Mevushal. The Rambam (Hilchot Shabbat 29:14), however, disagrees, based on the Gemara's (Bava Batra 97a) requirement that wine used for Kiddush be suitable for use as Nesachim on the Mizbeiach (libations on the Temple altar). The Maggid Mishneh (commenting on the Rambam ad. loc.) clarifies that although the Rambam agrees that we recite Borei Pri HaGefen on Yayin Mevushal, he believes that it is disqualified for Kiddush since Yayin Mevushal is unfit for Nesachim (Menachot 87a). He also notes that the Rambam is following the path of the Geonim's strict ruling regarding this issue. Tosafot base their ruling once again on the Talmud Yerushalmi that permits Yayin Mevushal for the Arba Kosot for, after all, the first of these Kosot is Kiddush. The Rosh notes that the Gemara excludes wine that is unfit for the Mizbeiach from use for Kiddush only if the wine is of poor quality, such as if it has a bad smell. The Rosh further explains that Yayin Mevushal is excluded from Nesachim only because it is been changed from its original form. The Beit Yosef (ad. loc.) records that the majority of Rishonim agree with Tosafot and the Rosh that Yayin Mevushal is acceptable for Kiddush (the Terumat HaDeshen 30 states explicitly that the majority of Rishonim rule leniently about this matter). In fact, he cites the Agur, who records that the practice in Ashkenaz and of all its eminent rabbinic leaders is to use Yayin Mevushal for Kiddush if no other wine of comparable quality is available. The Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 272:8) presents the lenient opinion as the primary view and cites the Rambam's strict view merely as "there are those who say that one should not recite Kiddush upon it." The Aruch Hashulchan (O.C. 272:9) observes that the Shulchan Aruch presents the lenient opinion as the normative view. The Rama, in turn, cites the aforementioned Agur who records that the practice is to use Yayin Mevushal if no other wine of comparable quality is available. The Mishna Berurah (272:23) infers from the Rama, though, that if there is a non-Mevushal wine available, one should choose the non-Mevushal wine in order to accommodate the strict opinion on this matter. The Shemirat Shabbat KeHilchatah (57:19) records the contemporary practice to specifically choose Yayin Mevushal for Kiddush due to concern that a Nochri or a non-observant Jew might touch it (which would render it prohibited to drink due to Kashrut regulations). He notes (footnote 95), however, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's opinion (ad. loc.) that our wines and grape juice, which are heated only briefly and whose taste is affected only marginally (in the perception of most people), are not classified as Yayin Mevushal. Rav Shlomo Zalman is entirely convinced regarding this matter to the extent that he says that one may rely on his opinion even in a lenient direction. Thus, according to Rav Shlomo Zalman, pasteurized wines and grape juice are acceptable for Kiddush even according to the Rambam, but become forbidden if touched by a Nochri or a non-observant Jew. Rav Yosef Shalom Eliashiv is cited (see Rav Ovadia Yosef's Teshuvot Yabia Omer 8:15) as agreeing with Rav Shlomo Zalman's ruling on this matter, at least in the direction of stringency. Rav Hershel Schachter stated (in the aforementioned Orthodox Union conference) that the Poskim in America have traditionally ruled leniently about this matter and that the prevailing custom in this country is to follow the lenient view. Rav Moshe Feinstein's lenient ruling (Teshuvot Igrot Moshe Yoreh Deah 3:31) is a prime example of the approach of the great American Poskim regarding this issue. Indeed, Rav Ovadia Yosef (Yabia Omer ad. loc.) rules leniently in accordance with what he writes is the prevailing practice in Israel to regard even pasteurized wine or grape juice as Mevushal. According to this approach, if all else is equal, one should use non-Mevushal wine

for Kiddush. Experience teaches (in my opinion), however, that one should consider following the practice recorded in the Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchatah in order to avoid Kashrut problems.

Is Grape Juice Acceptable for Kiddush? Although the aforementioned Gemara explicitly permits using freshly squeezed grape juice for Kiddush, some Rabbanim (Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin, Kitvei HaRav Henkin 2:28 in his first letter on the subject and Rav Moshe Shternbuch, Moadim UZemanim 3:255 footnote one) express reservations about doing so. They are concerned about a potential distinction between freshly squeezed grape juice and today's commercially available grape juice. They note that freshly squeezed grape juice retains the potential to ferment (as noted by the Rashbam to Bava Batra 97b s.v. Yayin Koseis). They write, however, that commercially available grape juice does not have this potential. There are two possible responses to this concern. First, Rav Zvi Pesach Frank (Teshuvot Har Zvi O.C. 1:158; he writes in 1926 to Rav Yitzchak Horowitz, a Rav in Hartford, Connecticut who issued a fiery ruling during the American Prohibition era forbidding the use of grape juice for Kiddush) writes that just as the Shulchan Aruch rules that Yayin Mevushal retains its original character as wine despite being cooked, so too grape juice retains its original character of wine despite its inability to ferment. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1:4) articulates an identical approach and rules that grape juice is acceptable for Kiddush. The second response, as noted by Rav Henkin in his second letter on the subject, is that grape juice does in reality have the potential to ferment. Indeed, Mr. Feivish Herzog (one of the fathers of the contemporary Kosher wine industry who is a Torah scholar with decades of experience in wine production) recounted at the aforementioned Orthodox Union conference that he told Rav Henkin that he need only remove the cover of a grape juice bottle, leave it exposed at room temperature, and add a little sugar (and some yeast if he wanted) and it would become "beautiful wine".

Conclusion In addition to Rav Zvi Pesach and Rav Shlomo Zalman who permit using grape juice for Kiddush, Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, Rav Moshe Feinstein (cited by Rav Zevulun Charlop in Beit Yitzchak 35:297-314), Rav Ovadia Yosef, Rav Yosef Shalom Eliashiv (cited in Yalkut Yosef 4:285) and Rav Gedalia Felder (Teshuvot Sheilat Yeshurun number five) also permit using grape juice for Kiddush. Even Rav Shternbuch writes that it has become common practice to use grape juice for Kiddush. Nonetheless, Rav Frank, Rav Henkin, and Rav Felder all note that the Magen Avraham (codified by the Mishna Berurah 272:5 and Aruch Hashulchan O.C. 272:1) rules that it is preferable (Mitzvah Min HaMuvchar) to use aged wine for Kiddush (support for the Magen Avraham may be found in the Behag in Hilchot Kiddush and other Geonim and Rishonim cited in Rav Felder's responsum). Rav Soloveitchik (cited by Rav Hershel Schachter and Rav Menachem Genack) also believes that it is preferable to avoid using Yayin Mevushal for Kiddush in order to accommodate the Rambam's stringent opinion. Thus, one who enjoys wine should use it for Kiddush, but it seems that those who do not may rely on the prevailing custom to follow the many great twentieth century Poskim who permit using grape juice for Kiddush. Next week, we shall (IY"Y and B"Y) examine Rav S.Z. Auerbach's controversial ruling that one should not recite Borei Pri HaGefen on reconstituted grape juice, which will lead us into our pre-Pesach review of the debate about using grape juice for the Arba Kosot.

May We Use Grape Juice for the Arba Kosot? – Part Two: The Berachah on Grape Juice from Concentrate by Rabbi Chaim Jachter

Last week we explored the issue as to whether we may use grape juice for Kiddush. We concluded that the majority opinion believes that grape juice is acceptable for Kiddush and the common practice reflects this ruling. This week we shall continue preparing for a review of the debate as to whether we may use grape juice for the Arba Kosot. We will discuss a provocative ruling of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1:4) regarding the Berachah on grape juice made from concentrate.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's Ruling Rav Shlomo Zalman writes that the process of making grape juice from concentrate first involves evaporating the water from the juice, leaving a highly concentrated form. The concentrate is stored and, when it is time to bottle the grape juice, a quantity of water four times the amount of the grape juice concentrate is added to reconstitute it. Rav Shlomo Zalman suggests that one should recite Shehakol (rather than Borei Pri HaGefen) on the resulting product since it is considered grape juice-flavored water, not grape juice. We noted last week that Rav Shlomo Zalman believes that grape juice retains its status as wine (whose Berachah is Borei Pri HaGefen and may be used for Kiddush). He also believes that the grape juice concentrate itself retains the status of wine even though it cannot be fermented while it is the form of concentrate. (Rav Yisrael Belsky mentioned at the Orthodox Union's seminar on grape juice and wine that we referred to last week that the wine experts he consulted were unsure regarding this specific point.) Rav Shlomo Zalman argues, however, that he finds no compelling reason to say that the water added to grape juice concentrate, which constitutes eighty percent of the product, should attain the status of wine. (One could respond that since the

added water blends with the concentrate to recreate almost the exact taste of the original grape juice, the added water becomes one entity with the concentrate and the entire mixture therefore enjoys the status of wine.) Moreover, Rav Shlomo Zalman argues that fundamentally we should not recite the Berachah of Borei Pri HaGefen even on grape juice. The only reason we do recite this Berachah on grape juice is because of its potential to become wine, as stated by the Rashbam (Bava Batra 97b s.v. Yayin Koseis). Accordingly, Rav Shlomo Zalman reasons that only that which emerged from the grape has the status of wine and not the water added to the grape juice concentrate.

Rav Shlomo Zalman, though, concedes that there may be a reasonable argument for why one should recite Borei Pri HaGefen on grape juice made from concentrate. He notes that the fact that this product tastes like grape juice can justify the recitation of Borei Pri HaGefen, based on the Magen Avraham (204:16). In addition, in determining the Berachah on a mixed product, we recite a Berachah on the more important ingredient, even though the other ingredient may constitute a majority of the product (Mishnah Berurah 212:1). Thus, Rav Shlomo Zalman concludes that it is possible to recite Borei Pri HaGefen on grape juice from concentrate, even though the water added to the grape juice concentrate retains the status of water and has not attained the status of wine.

Berachah Acharonah on Grape Juice from Concentrate Nonetheless, Rav Shlomo Zalman argues that there is a complication regarding the recitation of the Berachah Acharonah of Al HaGefen on grape juice from concentrate, since we cannot count the water component towards the Shiur of a Reviit (approximately three ounces). This amount of wine must be drunk within the time that it normally takes to drink a Reviit or eat a Pras of food (see Mishnah Berurah 209:1) in order to warrant such a Berachah Acharonah. Rav Shlomo Zalman concludes that just as the Mishnah Berurah (208:48) rules that we should not count non-flour components of cake to the Shiur of KeZayit required in order to recite Al HaMichyah, so too we should not consider the water added to grape juice concentrate for the required Reviit. We should note that there is considerable discussion regarding the aforementioned ruling of the Mishnah Berurah; see that entire passage in the Mishnah Berurah, Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 202:10), Chazon Ish (O.C. 26:8), and Teshuvot Igrot Moshe (O.C. 1:71). We should also note that this aspect of Rav Shlomo Zalman's ruling seems to be difficult, as he seems to rule (in a responsum printed in the very same volume – Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1:91:4) that sugar that is fully integrated into a food such as cake does count toward a KeZayit. Similarly, the water added to the concentrate fully integrates with the grape juice and would appear therefore to count towards the Shiur of Reviit according to Rav Shlomo Zalman's own standards.

Kiddush on Grape Juice from Concentrate Finally, Rav Shlomo Zalman writes that he believes that we cannot use grape juice from concentrate for Kiddush. He refers to the dispute that rages amongst the Rishonim regarding the permissibility of Yayin Mevushal (cooked wine) for Kiddush, which we reviewed in last week's essay. Rav Shlomo Zalman argues that even the Rishonim who find Yayin Mevushal to be acceptable for Kiddush would agree that grape juice from concentrate is unacceptable for Kiddush, as they only validate Yayin Mevushal because they believe that cooking the wine enhances it (see Rosh, Bava Batra 6:10).

However, when the grape juice is reduced to concentrate, it is certainly disqualified from use for Kiddush. Rav Shlomo Zalman argues that the grape juice's acceptability for Kiddush is not restored after water has been added to it, since the quality of the grape juice is somewhat downgraded by the process involved in evaporating the water from the original grape juice (unlike the process of cooking wine, which improves the wine, as explained by the Rosh). He believes that its disqualification from use for Kiddush is permanent. (Rav Belsky clarified that this is not due to concern of Dichui [see Sukkah 33], as Dichui is a concept that is relevant only to a Cheftza Shel Mitzvah such as a Lulav.) One could respond that the reduction in quality of the grape juice is very subtle and thus should not be Halachically relevant. Indeed, Rav Shlomo Zalman in the very same volume of Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo (number 25) rules that the pasteurization process does not render wine Yayin Mevushal since the change effected by the cooking is minimal and very subtle. Although we noted last week that Rav Shlomo Zalman's approach to this matter is not accepted by many Poskim, one could nevertheless argue that the slight change in quality of grape juice from concentrate is insignificant. We should also mention that most Poskim generally believe that concentrated food regains its earlier status when it is reconstituted. For example, the Chazon Ish (Yoreh Deah 41:4 ; but see Teshuvot Har Zvi Y.D. 103-104) rules that powdered milk is still considered milk when it is reconstituted (the Chazon Ish writes in the context of the prohibition of Chalav Akum). A careful reading of Rav Shlomo Zalman's highly nuanced arguments reveals that he fundamentally agrees with the Chazon Ish regarding this point.

Criticism of Rav Shlomo Zalman's Ruling Rav Yisrael Belsky mentioned at the aforementioned OU conference on wine and grape juice that the practice in this country, sanctioned by eminent Poskim, has been to consider grape juice from concentrate as acceptable for Kiddush. This practice predates Rav Shlomo Zalman

Teshuva by many years. Moreover, Rav Shlomo Zalman notes at the beginning of his Teshuva that it is widely accepted to use grape juice from concentrate for Kiddush.

In fact, none of the other Teshuvot that we cited last week that permit using grape juice for Kiddush (such as Rav Frank and Rav Henkin's Teshuvot) distinguish between grape juice made from concentrate and grape juice that is not made from concentrate. Moreover, Rav Belsky reports that when informed of Rav Shlomo Zalman's ruling, Rav Yosef Shalom Eliashiv responded that there is an explicit Talmudic passage that contradicts this ruling (although it is unclear to which Talmudic passage Rav Eliashiv alluded).

Rav Gedalia Felder (Yesodei Yeshurun 3:219-221) writes that he believes that grape juice from concentrate is acceptable for Kiddush (although he writes that he has not issued a ruling "Halacha LeMaaseh," but merely expressed his thoughts on the matter). Rav Felder adduces a proof to his position from Sukkah 12a, as explained by Tosafot (Yoma 76b s.v. Gamar). The Gemara refers to imported coagulated wine, which Tosafot explain is drunk when reconstituted. Rav Felder writes, "This provides clear proof that wine whose water is removed has its original status of wine restored when it is subsequently reconstituted."

Rav Belsky stated that Shabbat 77a, as explained by Tosafot (I believe he refers to s.v. VeOd, where Tosafot state that such wine is even suitable for a Kos Shel Berachah, ritual purposes) constitutes similar proof that wine whose water has been removed has its original status restored when reconstituted. Rav Shlomo Zalman anticipates this argument and distinguishes between coagulated wine, whose original status can be restored when it is reconstituted, and grape juice concentrate whose original status cannot be so restored.

Rav Shlomo Zalman argues that fundamentally grape juice does not merit a special Berachah. We recite Borei Pri HaGefen only because of its potential to become wine, as we discussed earlier. Hence, the moment it loses its potential to become wine, which occurs when it is in concentrate form, grape juice is categorized in its more fundamentally correct status as an ordinary drink upon which a Shehakol is recited. Wine, on the other hand, fundamentally merits a special Berachah and does not lose its special status as wine when it assumes a solid form.

Rav Belsky responds that we find no source in the Gemara to distinguish between wine and grape juice regarding this matter, which seems to greatly weaken Rav Shlomo Zalman's argument. Moreover, Rav Belsky argues that since the Gemara believes that coagulated wine can be restored to its original status when it is reconstituted, then most certainly grape juice concentrate, which has not changed its original form, should be restored to its original status when reconstituted.

Finally, we should note that Menachot 54b as explained by Rashi (Pesachim 33b s.v. Zeitim VeAnavim) also seems to constitute clear proof that when a dehydrated substance is reconstituted its original status is restored despite the fact that the water added is not from the original item. Rav Shlomo Zalman responds that when grape juice is reduced to concentrate it is considered to have lost its original form entirely, and thus the "new" water that is introduced to it cannot integrate into the concentrate and restore it to its original status. This argument appears difficult, and I believe that Rav Eliashiv was referring to this section of Menachot 54a when he stated that there is an explicit passage in the Gemara that contradicts Rav Shlomo Zalman's ruling.

Conclusion All of the Teshuvot of Rav Shlomo Zalman are characterized by profound thought and penetrating logic (I find learning each of his Teshuvot to be an exhilarating Torah experience). They all require much effort to fully comprehend and analyze. Nonetheless, it seems that consensus opinion of Rabbanim and the prevailing custom does not accept this particular ruling of Rav Shlomo Zalman. Indeed, Rav Belsky stated that we may continue to rely on the many Poskim who found reconstituted grape juice acceptable for Kiddush. In addition, we should note that Rav Moshe Heinemann of the Star-K rules (see <http://www.star-k.com/kashrus/kk-thirst-wine.htm>) that grape juice from concentrate is restored to its original status even regarding Kiddush, provided that the water added in the reconstitution process is no more than six times the amount of the grape juice concentrate and that the resulting product tastes like grape juice (see Rama O.C. 204:5 and Mishnah Berurah 204:32). Finally, Dayan Weisz (Teshuvot Minchat Yitzchak 7:61) seems to disagree with Rav Shlomo Zalman, as he specifically discusses reconstituted grape juice and makes no mention of the concerns that appear in the Minchat Shlomo. Next week we shall, IY"H and B"N, discuss the permissibility of using grape juice for the Arba Kosot on Pesach based on the ideas we have so far developed.

May We Use Grape Juice for the Arba Kosot? – Part Three by Rabbi Chaim Jachter

In the past two issues, we have concluded that most Poskim permit using grape juice for Kiddush and that most Poskim believe that the Berachah for reconstituted grape juice (made from concentrate) is Borei Pri HaGefen. This week we shall focus on whether we may use grape juice for the Arba Kosot. We will base our discussion of this issue on a responsum written by Rav Menachem Genack which appears in his Sefer entitled Gan Shoshanim (2:66-71).

Introduction The question of whether one may use grape juice for the Arba Kosot was not dealt with in the Halachic literature until the twentieth century. Although the Gemara (Bava Batra 97b and see Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 272:2) rule that one may use freshly-squeezed grape juice for Kiddush (as we have discussed in an earlier issue), the Poskim did not discuss the question of Arba Kosot until recent decades. The reason for this appears to be that grape juice was simply unavailable at Pesach time in previous generations. After harvesting in the autumn, grapes would either be made into wine or spoil during storage. Only in the modern age has mankind learned how to preserve grape juice to last and facilitate its availability year round. This is an important point to bear in mind as we discuss this issue.

The Opinions Modern day Poskim have presented differing views regarding this topic. Rav Moshe Feinstein (cited by his son Rav David Feinstein in Hagadot Kol Dodi chapter 3 section 8) and Rav Zvi Pesach Frank (Mikraei Kodesh, Pesach 2:section 35) believe that grape juice is unacceptable for Arba Kosot. Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik (cited by Rav Genack and Rav Hershel Schachter, Nefesh Ha-Rav p.185) believes that one who does not enjoy wine should use grape juice for the Arba Kosot. The Seder HaAruch (p.112) cites Rav Chaim Kanievsky, who relates that the Chazon Ish used grape juice for the Arba Kosot. Similarly, Rav Moshe Sternbuch (Teshuvot VeHanagot Orach Chaim 2:243) relates that Rav Dov Berish Weidenfeld (the Tchebiner Rav, a leading mid-twentieth century authority) used grape juice for the Arba Kosot.

The Basis of the Arguments Rav Soloveitchik and Rav Feinstein base their arguments on the same source. The Gemara (Pesachim 108b) states that one who uses undiluted wine (wine was customarily diluted with water in a three-to-one ratio of water to wine during Talmudic times) for the Arba Kosot fulfills his obligation to drink wine, but not his obligation to commemorate and celebrate his freedom ("Cheirut"). Rashbam (ad.loc. s.v. Yedei) explains that the one who uses undiluted wine has failed to fulfill the Mitzva of Arba Kosot in the fullest sense, because "only diluted wine is prestigious (Chashuv)." The Rashbam (who lived in France during the twelfth century) adds that only the wine in Talmudic times required dilution since it was exceptionally potent. We see from this Gemara that wine used for Arba Kosot must be "Chashuv".

Rav Moshe Feinstein rules that grape juice is simply not Chashuv. If, however, drinking wine will seriously damage one's health, even Rav Feinstein would seem to agree that grape juice would suffice (see Teshuvot Igrot Moshe O.C. 1:172, Rav Dov Brisman's Teshuvot Shalmei Chovah 1:71, and TABC's Bikkurei Sukkah section fifty). Rav Soloveitchik, on the other hand, argues that for someone who does not enjoy drinking wine, grape juice is Chashuv and wine is, in turn, not Chashuv. Moreover, he notes that the Rambam (Hilchot Chametz UMatzah 7:9) explains that we require wine for the Arba Kosot to be diluted "in order that the drinking of the wine should be pleasant, all according to the wine and the taste of the consumer." We see from the Rambam that the beverage consumed for the Arba Kosot should be pleasant for the consumer. Therefore, concludes Rav Soloveitchik, if one does not enjoy wine, he should use grape juice for the Arba Kosot, as that will be a pleasant drink according to his taste.

Rav Feinstein's Proof Rav Feinstein cites the Talmud Yerushalmi (Pesachim Chapter 10) as proof for his opinion. The Yerushalmi relates that Rav Yona drank the four cups at the Seder and had a headache until Shavuot. It is also recounted in this source that Rav Yehuda the son of Rav Hai drank the four cups of wine at the Seder and had a headache until Sukkot. Rav Feinstein infers from this passage that grape juice is unacceptable for the Arba Kosot. Had grape juice been acceptable, these rabbis would have drunk grape juice in order to avoid experiencing a headache for such an inordinate amount of time. Rav David Willig related (in a shiur delivered at Yeshiva University in 1979) that when this argument was presented to Rav Soloveitchik, the Rav responded that "obviously" grape juice was not available to the rabbis mentioned in the Talmud Yerushalmi.

It turns out that Rav Soloveitchik's intuition was indeed correct. Rav Genack confirmed with Mr. Feivish Herzog of Kedem wines (one of the "fathers" of the American kosher wine industry who, in addition to being a Torah scholar, has many decades of experience with wine-making) that in pre-modern times grape juice was unavailable during Pesach time, as we mentioned at the beginning of our discussion. When Rav Genack presented this point to Rav David Feinstein, the latter conceded that one cannot deduce from the passage in the Yerushalmi that grape juice is unacceptable for the Arba Kosot. Nonetheless, we should clarify that Rav Moshe's ruling still stands, because he believes that grape juice is not a Chashuv drink (the passage in the Yerushalmi simply does not constitute a proof to his assertion).

Rav Zvi Pesach Frank's Argument Rav Zvi Pesach argues that grape juice is unacceptable because it is non-alcoholic and thus cannot be "MeSameiach" (make one happy). The Rashbam (Pesachim 108b s.v. Yedei Yayin) indicates that a key aspect of the Arba Kosot is to bring about Simcha. The Sefer HaMichtam (at the beginning of the tenth chapter of Pesachim) also presents the Mitzvah of Arba Kosot as a Mitzvah instituted by Chazal with the intention to promote rejoicing. Tosafot (Pesachim 108b s.v. Yedei Yayin) and the Ran (23b in the pages of the Rif to Pesachim s.v. Mah) note this point as well. Rav Zvi Pesach seeks to demonstrate

that grape juice does not promote Simcha from the fact that the Gemara (Taanit 30a) permits drinking freshly pressed wine at the Tisha BeAv eve "Seudah HaMafseket" (one is generally not allowed to have anything that will promote happiness at this meal). Moreover, Rashi (Bava Metzia 66b s.v. LePakuchoi) seems to indicate that wine's special character is derived from the fact that it brings Simcha through its alcoholic content. One could respond to these arguments in a number of ways. My Talmid (and cousin) Yehuda Kranzler cites his grandfather, Rav Yisroel Feldman ZT"L of Milwaukee, who suggests that if one puts a few drops of wine in the grape juice, it would be valid even according to Rav Frank. Even though the wine is technically speaking "Bateil" (nullified- wine is nullified in six times its volume, see Rama O.C. 204:5 and Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 124:5), it is still somewhat intoxicating and will cause a certain degree of Simcha. I have heard (third-hand) that this was the practice of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach. Second, Rashi (Taanit 30a s.v. Yayin) explains that freshly squeezed wine may be used at the Seudah Hamafseket, because it is "new, sweet, inferior to aged wine, causes stomach disorders, and is harmful." Today's grape juice is therefore hardly comparable to the Talmud's freshly squeezed wine in regard to its potential for Simcha. Indeed, grape juice is perceived by many as special and consumed only on special occasions such as Shabbat and Yom Tov. In addition, Rav Genack presents an intriguing proof that grape juice does in fact promote Simcha. He notes that the Gemara (Bava Batra 97a) states that freshly squeezed grape juice is acceptable if offered as Nesachim on the Mizbeiach (Temple wine libations). He also notes that Sefer Shofetim (9:13) describes wine as making both Hashem and people happy. Rashi (ibid.) explains that the Leviim recite their song in the Beit HaMikdash only at the time that the wine is poured on the Mizbeiach (see Berachot 35a). Rav Genack reasons that if grape juice is acceptable for Nesachim whose purpose is in part for Simcha (see Rashi Menachot 20a s.v. Aderabbah), then it should also satisfy the Simcha aspect of the Arba Kosot.

Rav Soloveitchik's Practice Rav Soloveitchik used grape juice for the last three cups at his Seder because he did not enjoy wine. However, he used wine for the first cup because it was his practice to follow the opinion of the Rambam (Hilchot Shabbat 29:14) that cooked wine is unacceptable for Kiddush because cooked wine would not be accepted for use for Nesachim on the Mizbeiach in the Beit Hamikdash (as we explained in an earlier issue). One cannot extrapolate from the fact that the Gemara permits grape juice for Kiddush, because our grape juice is cooked and not "fresh off the press" as described in the Gemara (as we explained earlier). Rav Genack discusses (in his responsum) the basis to distinguish between the Arba Kosot where cooked wine is acceptable and Kiddush where cooked wine is unacceptable according to the Rambam. Common practice (as we noted), however, is to regard "cooked wine", generally speaking, as acceptable for Kiddush. It is also worthwhile to note the possibility raised by Rav Soloveitchik that even if one wishes to be strict for the Rambam's opinion regarding cooked wine for Kiddush, perhaps the participants at the Seder (other than the one who recites Kiddush) can use cooked wine for their first cup (see Nefesh Harav p. 185). It should be noted that Rav Soloveitchik also followed the Rambam's opinion that one should not use wine for Kiddush that has had sugar added to it.

Conclusion The question as to whether one who does not like wine may use grape juice for the Arba Kosot is debated by twentieth century Halachic authorities. This question remains unresolved, as neither side seems to have brought conclusive proof to its position. Moreover, one cannot simply choose to be strict and use wine for the Arba Kosot, as Rav Soloveitchik believes that one who does not like wine specifically should have grape juice. One must therefore consult his Rav for a ruling on this matter.

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This publication contains Torah matter and should be treated accordingly

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INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF

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[RABBI MORDECHAI KORNFELD]

@ Pesachim 109

1) **THE SIZE OF A "REVI'IS" OPINIONS:** The Gemara describes a *Revi'is* (which is a measure of liquid volume) in terms of a cubic *Etzba*, or thumb-breadth (which is a measure of length). Rav Chisda explains that a Revi'is is equal to the volume contained within a box that is 2 Etzba'os long, 2 Etzba'os wide, and 2.7 Etzba'os high (2 X 2 X 2.7 cubic Etzba'os, or 10.8 cubic Etzba'os).

The Rashbam explains further that a Revi'is is equal to the size of 1.5 average *eggs*.

These definitions have practical ramifications for every Mitzvah that requires a Shi'ur of a Revi'is, Beitzah, or k'Zayis (half of a Beitzah), and they are the subject of much discussion among the Acharonim.

(a) The NODA B'YEHUDAH (see TZELACH here and 116b) used his thumbs (Etzba'os) to determine the volume of an egg, based on the figure that the Chachamim gave for the size of an egg in terms of thumb-breadths. He then measured the volume of an average-sized egg and found that it was only *half* of the volume that he calculated with his thumbs. He deduced that either thumbs had become larger than they were in the times of the Gemara, or eggs had shrunk. He argued that it is illogical to presume that our thumbs are larger than those of generations past, because it is known that each generation is weaker than the previous one. Rather, he concluded, it must be that eggs have become smaller.

Therefore, for any Mitzvah which involves the Shi'ur of a Beitzah (or Revi'is), one should use *twice* the amount that the Gemara requires. (For example, since the Gemara says that one must eat "one Beitzah" of Matzah on the first night of Pesach, today one must eat *two* Beitzim of Matzah, based on today's average egg size, in order to compensate for the decrease in size of eggs.)

This opinion is cited as the Halachah by the CHASAM SOFER (Teshuvos OC 127), the VILNA GA'ON (Ma'aseh Rav #105), and the CHAZON ISH (Kuntrus ha'Shi'urim, OC 39).

The Chazon Ish converted the size of a Revi'is into cubic centimeters. Based on the findings of the Noda b'Yehudah, who judged the value of an average thumb-width to be 2.4 centimeters, the Chazon Ish defined a Revi'is as 150 cc (cubic centimeters, or, in terms of weight, approximately 150 grams of water).

(THE TESHUVAH ME'AHAVAH, a disciple of the Noda b'Yehudah, rejected his teacher's calculations based on the fact that "the Noda b'Yehudah was one of the tallest men in the generation, and he measured with his own thumbs." The Chasam Sofer rejects this argument and points out that although 2.4 centimeters is a relatively large width of a thumb, it is not uncommon for thumbs to be that size. See Midos u'Mishkalos Shel Torah, chapter 87.)

However, these calculations are problematic for several reasons.

1. The RAMBAM (in Perush ha'Mishnayos to Eduyos 1:2) writes that a Revi'is equals the weight of approximately 27 dirhams (a common coin in Arabian countries at the time of the Rambam, and still used today in some places). Based on numismatic records and collectors' dirhams, experts have determined that the weight of 27 dirhams equals approximately *half* of the size of the Noda b'Yehudah's Revi'is.

2. Additionally, the Rambam (Hilchos Eruvin 1:12) writes that a Revi'is weighs as much as 17.5 Dinars (common coins used in the times of the Gemara). The weight of the Dinar to which the Rambam refers is well known, because the Rambam based his measurements on the BEHAG and the RIF (Kidushin 12a) who write that the Dinar in the times of the Gemara was equivalent to the contemporary Arabic "Sheshdang" Dinar. Furthermore, the Rambam himself specifies the weight of a Dinar in terms of barley grains, which later Rishonim compare to carob pits (four barley grains are equal to one carob pit). These modes of measurement correlate with precision even today, and thus the weight of the Dinar is fairly well

known. (That is, it is highly unlikely that both the barley grains and the carob pits shrank *equally* since the days of the Rishonim.) The size of a Revi'is is as calculated based on the weight of the Dinar equals, again, *half* the size of the Noda b'Yehudah's Revi'is.

3. The Mishnah in Kelim (17:11) says that the measures of volume used by the Chachamim were the same as the Italian (Roman) measures. Based on comparisons to ancient Roman measures, it can be demonstrated that the size of a Revi'is was much smaller than the size proposed by the Noda b'Yehudah (see Midos u'Mishkalos Shel Torah 1:48).

4. The CHAFETZ CHAIM in BI'UR HALACHAH (OC 271:13, DH Shel Revi'is) points out that the Gemara in Yoma (80a) says that a person can hold more than a Revi'is (or the volume of 1.5 eggs) in both of his cheeks at one time. The Chafetz Chaim writes that after considerable experimentation, he observed that the average person can hold, at most, the volume of two modern eggs in his mouth at once. According to the Noda b'Yehudah, who says that a Revi'is contains twice the amount of eggs than it did in the times of the Gemara, a person should be able to hold at least *three* modern eggs in his mouth at once. No average-sized person is able to do this.

(The TOSFOS RID in Yoma (80a) in fact preceded the Chafetz Chaim with this observation. He writes that even 1.5 eggs cannot be held in the cheeks at once unless a person holds his head downwards, in an unnatural position, in order to prevent himself from swallowing the liquid in his cheeks. See Insights to Yoma 80:1.)

5. The CHAZON ISH (as recorded in the Steipler Ga'on's SHI'URIM SHEL TORAH 3:9-10) raises another question on the measurement of the Noda b'Yehudah. Throughout the generations, the Jewish people have had the custom to use between 70 and 100 grams of silver for the Mitzvah of Pidyon ha'Ben, the redemption of the firstborn son. The Rambam writes that a Revi'is weighs the same as 17.5 Dinars (see 2. above), and it is known that Pidyon ha'Ben is performed with 20 Dinars (or 14% more than the weight of a Revi'is). Accordingly, the weight of the silver used for Pidyon ha'Ben should be 14% more than the weight of silver which is equivalent to a Revi'is. However, if a Revi'is is 150 grams (as the Chazon Ish calculates based on the Noda b'Yehudah), then one should use 14% more of that amount -- 150 grams -- of silver for Pidyon ha'Ben, or about 170 grams, but it was never the custom anywhere to use that much silver for Pidyon ha'Ben.

6. It is interesting to note that some ancient eggs actually survived to present times. RAV YAKOV GERSHON WEISS (author of MIDOS U'MISHKALOS SHEL TORAH) related to us that mummified eggs found in the pyramids of Egypt, as well as eggs preserved by the ashes of Vesuvius in the ruins of Pompei, are essentially the same size as today's eggs.

(b) RAV CHAIM NA'EH (in SHI'UREI TORAH) lived in Eretz Yisrael during the time of the British Mandate. He measured the Revi'is based on the dirham which was used in Israel during the reign of the Ottoman Empire, and was still in use during the British Mandate. The dirham he measured weighed 3.2 grams. Based on the Rambam's assertion that there are 27 dirhams in a Revi'is, Rav Chaim Na'eh concluded that the Revi'is must be 86.4 grams (27 X 3.2 = 86.4). (He pointed out that 86 happens to be the Gematriya of "Kos," cup.) According to this figure, the width of an Etzba, if one calculates backwards, is 2 centimeters, which is closer to the average thumb-width.

However, this size of the Revi'is is also problematic.

1. The weight of old dirhams fluctuates between 2.7 and 3 grams. Hence, the maximum size of a Revi'is should be 81 grams, and not 86 as Rav Chaim Na'eh states, who measured the Revi'is based on a dirham of 3.2 grams.

2. Second, records of the "Sheshdang" Dinar show that it weighed 4.25 grams, which makes a Revi'is (which is 17.5 Dinars) about 74.4 grams. When divided by 27, the weight of a dirham should be 2.75 grams, which fits within the range of the average weight of old dirhams.

3. Third, according to Rav Chaim Na'eh, an egg today should have an average size of 57 1/3 grams. (An egg is 2/3 of a Revi'is: 2/3 X 86 = 57 1/3.) In reality, the average egg is somewhat smaller than that. According to the calculation of the Revi'is based on old dirhams, the average egg should be about 50 grams, which is much closer to the actual size of today's eggs.

4. Fourth, there are 24 Etzba'os in one Amah. The size of an Amah is the distance from the elbow until the tip of the middle finger of the average arm. If the average Etzba is 2 centimeters, as Rav Chaim Na'eh asserts, and there are 24 Etzba'os in an Amah, then the Amah should be 48 centimeters. However, the length of the average arm, from elbow to tip of middle finger is less than 48 centimeters. Using the measure of the Etzba based on the Revi'is as calculated by dirhams, the Amah comes out to 46 centimeters, which is closer to the length of the average arm.

5. Fifth, RAV SHLOMO ZALMAN AUERBACH zt'l points out that the Gemara in Shabbos (14a) teaches that the Rabanan decreed that a person who drinks liquids which are Tamei becomes Tamei. The Rabanan enacted that Gezeirah so that a person would not eat Terumah at the same time that he has a Revi'is of Tamei liquid in his mouth (see Tosfos in Shabbos there). He remarks that according to Rav Chaim Na'eh, one could not possibly fit any food into one's mouth when there is already a Revi'is of liquid there.

(c) A third opinion suggests an even smaller calculation of the size of a Revi'is than Rav Chaim Na'eh's figure: approximately 74 cc. This opinion bases the size of the Revi'is on the size of the dirham at the time of the Rambam. Historical records show that the dirham has increased in weight through the centuries, and Rav Chaim Na'eh's dirham was larger than the Rambam's. (See MIDOS U'MISHKELOS SHEL TORAH, chapters 60-64.)

This figure is consistent with both the weight of the Dinar and the size of common eggs. The only problem that remains is the size of thumb-widths. If a Revi'is is 74 cc, then the average thumb-width should be 1.9 cm. However, the width of 2 cm is much more common. It is possible that the people of earlier generations had smaller fingers, or that when they measured finger-breadths, they pressed their fingers closer and harder together.

HALACHAH: The MISHNAH BERURAH (in BI'UR HALACHAH 271:13) writes that when one measures for a Mitzvah d'Oraisa, such as for Kidush on the night of Shabbos, one should be stringent and use the larger Revi'is, the size of at least two modern eggs. For a Mitzvah d'Rabanan, one may rely on the smaller size of a Revi'is.

What is the larger Shi'ur with which a person should be stringent? The CHAZON ISH writes that it is 150 cc. The IGROS MOSHE (OC I:36) says that approximately 120 cc suffices, based on the average thumb-width of 2.25 centimeters. The EINAYIM LA'MISHPAT (Berachos 39a) writes that the Vilna Ga'on gave a Kidush cup to his Talmid, Rav Yisrael mi'Shklov, which was found to hold approximately 120 cc.

B'Di'eved, one should attempt to use a cup that holds at least 100 cc (the volume of two eggs), as the Bi'ur Halachah writes. For Mitzvos d'Rabanan, one may rely on Rav Chaim Na'eh's calculation of 86 cc, or in extenuating circumstances, 74 cc, as described above.

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Covenant & Conversation

Thoughts on the Weekly Parsha from

Sir Jonathan Sacks

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth

[From 3 years ago - 5765]

<http://www.chiefrabbi.org/tt/index.html>

Tsav Blood, Idolatry or War

Today's sedra, speaking about sacrifices, prohibits the eating of blood:

Wherever you live, you must not eat the blood of any bird or animal. If anyone eats blood, that person must be cut off from his people. (Lev. 7: 26-27) However, it is clear that this is more than one prohibition among others. The ban on eating blood is fundamental to the Torah. So, for example, it occupies a central place in the covenant G-d makes with Noah - and through him, all humanity - after the Flood:

But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. (Gen. 9: 4) So too, Moses returns to the subject in his great closing addresses in the book of Devarim/Deuteronomy:

But be sure you do not eat the blood, because the blood is the life, and you must not eat the life with the meat. You must not eat the blood; pour it out on the ground like water. Do not eat it, so that it may go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is right in the eyes of the Lord. (Deut. 12: 23-25) What is wrong with eating blood? Maimonides and Nahmanides offer conflicting interpretations. For Maimonides - consistent with his programme throughout *The Guide for the Perplexed* - it is part of the Torah's extended battle against idolatry. He notes that the Torah uses identical language about idolatry and eating blood:

I will set my face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from his people. (Leviticus 17:10)

I will set my face against that man [who engages in Moloch worship] and his family and will cut him off from his people. (Leviticus 20:5) In no context other than blood and idolatry is the expression 'set my face against' used. Idolators, said Maimonides, believed that blood was the food of the spirits, and that by eating it, they would have 'something in common with the spirits' (*Guide*, III, 46). Eating blood is forbidden because of its association with idolatry.

Nahmanides says, contrariwise, that the ban has to do with human nature. We are affected by what we eat.

If one were to eat the life of all flesh, and it would then attach itself to one's own blood, and they would become united in one's heart, and the result would be a thickening and coarseness of the human soul so that it would closely approach the nature of the animal soul which resided in what he ate . . . (Ramban, *Commentary to Lev. 17: 13*) Eating blood, implies Nahmanides, makes us cruel, bestial, animal-like.

Which explanation is correct? We now have copious evidence, through archaeology and anthropology, that both are. Maimonides was quite right to see the eating of blood as an idolatrous rite. Human sacrifice was widespread in the ancient world.

Among the Greeks, for example, the god Kronos required human victims. The Maenads, female worshippers of Dionysus, were said to tear living victims apart with their hands and eat them. The Aztecs of South America practised human sacrifice on vast scale, believing that without its meals of human blood, the sun would die: 'Convinced that in order to avoid the final cataclysm it was necessary to fortify the sun, they undertook for themselves the mission of furnishing it with the vital energy found only in the precious liquid which keeps man alive.'

Barbara Ehrenreich, from whose book *Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passions of War*, these facts come, offers a fascinating speculation on the birth of blood sacrifice. Quoting Walter Burkert, she argues that one of the most formative experiences of the first human beings must have been the terror of being attacked by an animal predator:

The utmost danger is met with excitement and anxiety. Usually there will be but one way of salvation: one member of the group must fall prey to the hungry carnivores, then the rest will be safe for the time being. An outsider, an invalid, or a young animal will be most liable to become the victim. This situation of pursuit by predators must have played a momentous role in the evolution of civilization, while man, as a hunter, became a predator himself. Ehrenreich suggests that 'the sacrificial ritual in many ways mimics the crisis of a predator's attack. An animal or perhaps a human member of the

group is singled out for slaughter, often in a spectacularly bloody manner.' The eating of the victim and his or its blood temporarily occupies the predator, allowing the rest of the group to escape in safety. That is why blood is offered to the gods. As Mircea Eliade noted, 'the divine beings who play a part in initiation ceremonies are usually imagined as beasts of prey - lions and leopards (initiatory animals par excellence) in Africa, jaguars in South America, crocodiles and marine monsters in Oceania.' Blood sacrifice appears when human beings are sufficiently well organized in groups to make the transition from prey to predator. They then relive their fears of being attacked and eaten.

Ehrenreich does not end there, however. Her view is that this emotional reaction - fear and guilt - survives to the present as part of our genetic endowment from earlier times. It leaves two legacies: one, the human tendency to band together in the face of an external threat; the other, the willingness to risk self-sacrifice for the sake of the group. These emotions appear at times of war. They are not the cause of war, but they invest it with 'the profound feelings - dread, awe, and the willingness to sacrifice - that make it "sacred" to us.' They help explain why it is so easy to mobilize people by conjuring up the spectre of an external enemy.

War is a destructive and self-destructive activity. Why then does it persist? Ehrenreich's insight suggests an answer. It is the dysfunctional survival of instincts, profoundly necessary in an age of hunter-gatherers, into an era in which such responses are no longer necessary. Human beings still thrill at the prospect of shedding blood.

Maimonides was right to see in the blood-sacrifice a central idolatrous practice. Nahmanides was equally correct to see it as a symptom of human cruelty. We now sense the profound wisdom of the law forbidding the eating of blood. Only thus could human beings be gradually cured of the deeply ingrained instinct, deriving from a world of predators and prey, in which the key choice is to kill or be killed. Evolutionary psychology has taught us about these genetic residues from earlier times which - because they are not rational - cannot be cured by reason alone, but only by ritual, strict prohibition and habituation. The contemporary world continues to be scarred by violence and terror. Sadly, the ban against blood sacrifice is still relevant. The instinct against which it is a protest - sacrificing life to exorcise fear - still lives on.

<http://www.chaburas.org/pesach98.html>

RABBI AARON ROSS

DIVREI TORAH ON THE HAGGADAH

ALL FOR ME

We read in the Haggadah that "In every generation a person is required to see himself as if he left Egypt." The Netziv, in his commentary *Imrei Shefer*, offers an interesting and unique approach to this phrase. He compares this line to the words of the Mishna in *Sanhedrin 37a*, which says that a person is required to say "For me the world was created." Removing that statement from its context in the Mishna, Netziv explains that the purpose of a person making such a statement is that if a person feels that all of creation was made for him, he will come to a greater love and appreciation of Hashem, and thus will focus himself even more than before on carrying out Hashem's will in the world. The same can be said with regard to the Exodus of Egypt. The entire purpose of the Exodus was so that Hashem could bring the Jews to Mount Sinai and there give them the Torah (see *Shemot 3:12*). Thus, if a person feels that the Exodus was done for him, that will entail a realization of the fact that the Torah was given specifically and directly to him, and will thus cause him to elevate himself in the learning of Torah and performance of the mitzvot.

WHO KNOWS ONE?

Perhaps the most neglected section of the Haggadah in terms of *Divrei Torah* is *Nirtzah*, generally thought of as a series of songs that include a few praises of Hashem and mention some basic Jewish ideas. We would like to offer an insight into "Echad Mi Yodei'ah" - "Who Knows One?" - as put

forth by Rav Yaakov of Lissa, the other of the Netivot HaMishpat, in his commentary Ma'aseh Nissim.

Rav Yaakov claims that the thirteen things listed in this song are things that specifically separate the Jews from the other nations of the world. As such, they are to be seen as goodnesses that G-d has done for the Jews, and it was for the purpose of doing these things, and thus publicizing the glory of Hashem, that the Jews were brought down to Egypt. As such, this song is said in question-and-answer form, as it reflects a public declaration of the greatness of Hashem.

After declaring that Hashem is one, we go on to mention the two tablets that the commandments were inscribed upon. As the giving of the Torah was the entire purpose of the Exodus, they are a direct result of our having been in Egypt. We then repeat that Hashem is one, since the giving of the two tablets entailed a public display of Hashem's glory and might.

Our Forefathers and Foremothers are then mentioned, as they are considered to be uniquely ours, with the blessing of Hashem being passed down through them to the Jews, and not to any of their other children (see virtually all of Sefer Bereishit for more on this idea). They were the merit through which we were able to receive the two tablets, and thus we once again count down to the beginning.

Five and six mention the Written and the Oral Torah, which, as we have already noted, were the main reasons that we went down to Egypt and ultimately emerged from there.

Number seven is the fact that Hashem gave Shabbat to the Jews, something that he did not give to any other nations. By doing so, He separated the Jews and made them holy among all of the nations (to the point that a non-Jew who observes Shabbat properly incurs the death penalty). As this commandment was, according to the Sages, given at Marah before the giving of the Torah (see commentaries to Shemot 15:25), it served as well as one of the things by which the Jews merited the giving of the Torah, which we again count down to.

While the act of circumcision is one performed by many peoples and cultures, only the Jews have a "Brit Mila" - a covenant that is connected to this action. In fact, the term "mahul" - circumcised one - refers in the gemara only to Jews and not to anyone who has undergone such a procedure. Since Avraham accepted this commandment upon himself and his household, he merited that his descendants received the Torah and were distinguished by Hashem in all of the ways that we have already mentioned.

What about number nine? What is it about pregnancy and birth that is unique to the Jews? The Ma'aseh Nissim says that the term "leida" (birth) applies only to the descendants of Yaakov (based on Bamidbar 1:18), and that the true bond between father and son does not apply to the wicked in the world. Since we are the only nation considered to have an inherent ancestry and heritage, thus we thank Hashem for it, and once again list the other items.

The Ten Commandments are mentioned separately, even though we have already referred to the two tablets as well as the Written and Oral Laws, since we as a nation heard these commandments directly from the mouth of Hashem. As a result, the Jews' belief in Hashem and in prophecy in general was strengthened and they were able to maintain a firmer grasp on the entire Torah.

Why do we refer to stars in number eleven? The Akeidat Yitzchak notes that the actions of man have the power to influence that which goes on in the heavens. If man does well, then all goes well above, and if man fails to do well, then the celestial bodies fall into a state of confusion. Since the Torah is the ultimate guide to how man must act, following it will ensure peace in the heavens. Thus, the Jews are endowed with the unique capacity to positively affect both the lower and the upper worlds, by way of everything that we have mentioned in the song up to this point.

Building off of that point, the Jewish people function at their fullest only when they exist as a unified group of twelve tribes. This is highlighted by Yaakov's statement (Bereishit 42:38) that if the brothers would lose Binyamin, Yaakov himself would descend to the netherworld. This

statement is explained by some commentaries as referring to the fact that his sons could only form a nation if all twelve were present and accounted for. Thus, one of Hashem's goodnesses is his forming of the nation in its full capacity, thus giving them the power, through the Torah, to influence both the lower and upper worlds, and thus to proclaim his Lordship over everything.

Finally, we come to Hashem's thirteen attributes of mercy. Without these, the nation would never have survived the sin of the golden calf or that of the spies. However, these attributes have guaranteed the existence of our nation, thus allowing us to exist as the symbol of Hashem's providence in the world. Thus, we count back all the way to one for one last time, tying together all thirteen elements of the song as a single plan to publicize the glory of Hashem.

GETTING A HEAD START

When telling the story of the Exodus, we say "Yachol Me-Rosh Chodesh" - suggesting that perhaps the commandment to tell the story could have taken effect not beginning on the night of the fifteenth of Nissan, but even from the first of the month. Why would we ask such a question? Do we suggest that one could take the lulav from the first day of Tishrei?

Rav Yoseif Dov Soloveitchik offers an explanation for this intriguing question, based on the words of Rambam. In Hil. Chametz U'Matzah 7:1, Rambam states that we have a commandment to tell over the story of the Exodus on the night of the fifteenth due to the verse of "zachor" - remember the day that you left Egypt. However, Rambam then goes a step further, stating that this is just like the "zachor" that we find by the commandment to keep the Shabbat. Why does Rambam do this? We certainly could figure out the meaning of the word without the extra verse!

Rav Soloveitchik suggests that this may provide the beginning of an answer to our question. By Shabbat, we begin thinking about and planning for it from the very beginning of the week. Our Song of the Day every day numbers each day as one more day closer to Shabbat, and the gemara is replete with stories of the Sages who would focus their entire week on preparing for the holy day. Perhaps the same might be true about Pesach - perhaps we should begin telling the story from the earliest feasible time, which would be not the beginning of the week, but the beginning of the month. While this explanation sees the Haggadah as speaking in response to or in accordance with the words of Rambam, it still leaves open the question of why either the composer of the Haggadah or Rambam himself see this as a connection. I leave this problem to our readership and look forward to any answers that people may have.

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SHEMA KOLEINU The Weekly Torah Publication Of The Marsha Stern
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Late Night Mitzvos

Moshe Shulman

The first Pasuk of Parshas Tzav says "... Hee Ha'Olah Al Mokda al HaMizbe'ach Kol HaLailah Ad HaBoker...". "It is the Olah which is burned on the Altar all night until the morning..." Why is there a double language of "Kol HaLailah Ad HaBoker"? Isn't "Kol HaLailah - all night", enough? Why does the Torah need to add "Ad HaBoker - until the morning"? The Torah Temimah explains that this double language teaches us that we are allowed to perform "Hekter Chalavim V'Eivarim" - the burning of the fats and limbs of a Korban - all night.

The first Mishna in Brachos (2a) adds that whenever the chachamim say that one can perform a Mitzvah until Chatzos they actually mean that the technical Z'man of the Mitzvah is throughout the night, but there is a decree Midirabanan that one should perform the Mitzvah before midnight to prevent one from missing the Z'man accidentally. The Mishna then says that Hekter Chalavim V'Eivarim can be fulfilled until morning.

Rashi on the Mishna in Brachos says that the chachamim did not make a G'Zairah that Hekter Chalavim V'Eivarim must be performed before

Chatzos, but he does not state his reasoning. Rashi. Therefore, the Torah Temimah suggests a reason of his own: the chachamim could not prohibit something that was explicitly allowed in the Torah. Where does the Torah specifically state that Hekter Chalavim V'Eivarim can be performed all night? In our Posuk in Parshas Tzav – “Kol HaLeilah Ad HaBoker”!

However, the Rambam argues that the chachamim did curtail the Z'man of Hekter Chalavim V'Eivarim. How does he get around our Posuk? He must disagree with Rashi and hold that the chachamim can prohibit something even if the torah explicitly permits it.

Everyone would agree, though, that one must eat the Korban Pesach by Chatzos. Even according to the view that Midioraisa one may to eat the Korban Pesach all night, there is still a G'zeira that one must eat the Korban by Chatzos. Even though this view can be learned from a Posuk it is not explicitly in the Torah and thus a G'zeira can be made on it.