



פרשת ויקהל פקודי
פרשת החודש
שבת מברכים
אדר תש"פ

KOLLEL ONLINE SHIURIM

The Coronavirus has not stopped Limmud Hatorah in our community. Despite the closing of our Beis Midrash, Kollel is very much alive and well.

We have harnessed modern technology to offer our community the ability to enjoy the same quality shiurim and learning programs from the comfort of your own home!

In addition to the many Chavrusas that continue, this week we featured 4 successful online shiurim and next week we are looking to expand our online offering.

Shaalos Uteshuvos: Sunday
9:30am with Rabbi Johnson

Maamarim on Pesach: Textual
Chassidus. 8:30pm with Rabbi
Yossi Gopin

Halachos of Pesach: In depth
study with Rabbi Stern. Tues-
day 8:30pm

Nach Shiur: Wednesday
8:30pm with Rabbi Gordon

Likutei Sichos project:
8:30pm Thursday with Rabbi
Aryeh Knapp

Beis Nissan 100 Years
This year marks 100 years
since the passing of the Rebbe
Rashab. A shiur in the Rebbe
Rashab's final Maamar, 8:30pm
Monday with Rabbi Y Johnson.

For access details, email
kollel@yeshivahcentre.org



#Kollel Continues. Learning in the park. See page 3 for more photos

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A Communal Effort

What is a community? The dictionary definition describes a community as a group of people who live in the same area or having a particular characteristic in common such as attitudes or interests.

In Torah thought, a Kahal (community) is not merely a conglomerate of individuals who band together with a common goal or for a common purpose.

A Kahal becomes a new entity which transcends the sum-total of its constituent members. A member of a Kahal transcends their individuality to become a part of something greater than themselves. All members merge together equally as one, to create this magical entity. Each member, irrespective of who they are, is an equal homogenous part of this unity.

This does not mean that as members of a community we lose our individual identity. Each member of the community is unique. They have their own strengths and talents which they can offer and are obliged to actualise and develop. They retain their own views, interests and opinions.

A member of community exists in two modes; as an individual but also as part of the Kahal.

To become part of a Kahal one is required on a certain level, to surrender and transcend their differences. We are often required to forgo our personal opinions in deference to the greater good and broader will. But this does not mean that a community is made up of faceless members. There is a level of duality which pervades.

This week we read the two combined Parshios of Vayakhel-Pekudei.

Vayakhel means to gather. Coming from the word Kahal, it stresses the unity of the people and how we form one collective. Pekudei on the other hand means to count. Counting something stresses its individual value. Pekudei emphasises the unique nature of each individual.

Vayakhel reflects the community as a whole, a seemingly homogenous group devoted to a common cause or set of values. To achieve this unity we must transcend, and sometimes forgo our individuality.

In contrast, the message of Pekudei is the celebration of the diversity and uniqueness of the individual and the specific contribution that they can make.

Whilst these two modes may seem contradictory, the fact that they come together teaches us that the two are completely compatible.

Both Vayakhel and Pekudei discuss the building of the Mishkan. The Mishkan was a total unit, a single Mitzvah (Vayakhel). But it was made up of unique elements; materials and keilim, each with a different function (Pekudei). If any of these parts was missing, the totality of the Mishkan would be lacking and Hashem's presence would not rest within it.

Vayakhel-Pekudei encourages us to utilise our uniqueness, but to contribute with it to the greater good of the community; to building our Mishkan. Like the individual items in the Mishkan, when we pull our diversity together, this is what weaves the fabric of the community. Without each individual, the community would not be complete or reach the successes that we are capable of.

One of the metaphors used to describe the unity of the Jewish people is that of a human body. All Jews of each generation and indeed all Jews throughout all generations, constitute one macro-body.

A body is a solitary unit. When we look at ourselves in the mirror we see a body, not just a collection of individual limbs. At the same time, the body does comprise individual limbs. Each limb has a unique function. But they all surrender themselves to serve the collective body with their unique function.

As a community, we are currently facing a common challenge - the spread of the Coronavirus. It is a communal matter because it impacts us all. We are all responsible and our individual actions and choices affect everyone else. And so we have to fight it as a community, together.

Like Pekudei, we all have our own unique ways to contribute and get involved. Each one is as integral as the other. Rabbonim and the lay-leadership play their role. The teachers and students, mothers and fathers play their role too. And we can all get involved in addressing the massive social welfare front that it developing; to help those in need of financial, emotional and other forms of support.

Like Vayakhel, we have to do it together; as one community, with one united stance, working hand-in-hand until we ultimately will prevail.

The weekly Halacha analysis

Cleaning for Pesach made easier

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

At the best of times, the lead-up to Pesach can be a stressful time as we get busy meticulously cleaning our homes. This year with the current challenges facing us; kids at home, increased worry, uncertainty and stress, the task and prospect of Pesach cleaning has become even more daunting.

In order to keep our sanity, our Shalom Bayis and our strength, it is important to know what is absolute Halacha, what are Chumros (Halachic stringencies) and what is not required at all. This way we can focus our energies on the cleaning that is required, without expending our effort and stress on cleaning which is unnecessary or questionable and certainly not priority.

A bit of background

The Torah prohibits us from owning Chometz with two prohibitions known as **בל יראה ובל ימצא**. Additionally, there is a positive Mitzvah to remove the Chometz from our homes so that when Pesach arrives our homes are Chometz-free.

Mideoraisa, nullifying the Chometz (Bittul) is sufficient. However the Chachamim require us to physically remove Chometz and not rely on the nullification¹.

The prohibition on owning Chometz Min Hatorah only applies to a Kzayis volume of Chometz, nonetheless the Chachamim extended the prohibition to even pieces less than a Kzayis.

The Shulchan Aruch² records that the Jewish people are a holy people and go to great lengths to avoid even a trace of Chometz, even beyond that which Halacha mandates. The Seforim extol the great zechusim which come from the effort of thoroughly cleaning for Pesach.

We all try our best and every Balabusta has her Pesach cleaning routine and standards.

The intent of this article is not to detract from anyone's stringencies, especially for those who can manage and are happy to do so. However many of us due to life-circumstance and other factors, have limited time, energy and wellbeing. And so we need to keep things in perspective as we approach the battle against Chometz.

Even those who are usually overly meticulous, may need to be a little bit more relaxed

this year and may find that they need to rely on some of the more basic halachic practises.

Which rooms

Any room which a person may have brought Chometz into over the course of the year requires cleaning³. A room (or cupboard) into which one never brings Chometz does not require Bedikas Chometz⁴. However if one has young children, every room in the house requires cleaning because it is inevitable that Chometz was taken throughout the house.

Homes, garages, offices, cars, prams, lockers, desks and bags all require cleaning for Pesach.

High-up spaces

High up ledges do not require Bedikas Chometz as they are too high to use for Chometz⁵. Therefore one does not need to clean on top of bookcases or wardrobe shelves unless one knows that they did place Chometz there. This is true even if one has young children.

Hard to access areas

The Shulchan Aruch rules that if Chometz has fallen between the cracks of one's floor boards and cannot be reached, one is not required to remove the floor boards. Since the Chometz will be nullified and therefore the obligation to remove it is only Rabbinic, the Chachamim did not require one to exert excessive effort to remove the Chometz.

Based on this, one does not need to move heavy furniture pieces which are difficult to move to clean under or behind them e.g. bookcases, pianos, large sideboards, fridges, dishwashers and ovens. One need only clean as far as they can reach (using a vacuum nozzle) and rely on the Bittul for the rest. Furniture which is easy to move or regularly moved must be moved to clean beneath them. This includes beds, couches, tables and chairs.

Likewise, one does not need to dismantle things (where it is not easy or common to do so) to reach Chometz which may be inside. Instead we rely on Bittul. One is not required to unstitch couch lining, even when one knows that there is certainly Chometz inside.

Outdoor areas

Outdoor areas are more lenient because of the likelihood that any Chometz would have been eaten by birds. On Erev pesach they should be

visually inspected⁶. If one does eat Chometz outdoors or one's children do, they should be swept, especially where this was done within 30 days of Yomtov.

Tiny crumbs

Technically, tiny crumbs (pirurim) are so insignificant that they are automatically nullified⁷. Whilst one may not be obligated to remove them, nonetheless one cannot consume even the tiniest speck of Chometz on Pesach and so kitchen or food areas must be thoroughly cleaned from all crumbs.

Nonetheless it is an accepted practise (and according to some opinions Halachically required) to remove even tiny crumbs in all cases.

Seforim

Based on the above, many Poskim rule that Meikar Hadin seforim do not require to be cleaned⁸. Nonetheless it is an acceptable Chumra for Seforim which have been used near food to either be cleaned (shaken out) or included in the sale of Chometz. One should have separate bentchers and preferably siddurim for Pesach as they are used around food⁹.

Soiled Chometz

Chometz pieces which are smaller than a Kzayis (and certainly crumbs) which have become even slightly soiled (Metunaf Ktzas) and will be nullified, do not need to be removed as there is no concern that they will be consumed¹⁰.

Therefore, for difficult to clean areas, after rooms have been swept they should be mopped with a strong cleaning product which should be pushed into the cracks and crevices to render any remaining crumbs soiled. One does not need to clean under skirting boards using toothpicks etc.

Chometz which is completely spoiled or rotten to the extent that it would be inedible for a dog, does not need to be removed even when larger than a Kzayis¹¹. This also includes soaps, shampoo, etc.

Clothing

Based on the above, clothing which has been through a washing cycle with deter-

gent does not need to be checked and the pockets do not need to be shaken out. The detergent renders any crumbs soiled. Likewise, previously washed linen and towels do not need to be checked or washed again. If one never puts food into their pockets or purses, they do not need to be cleaned even if they have not been washed.

Bins

Outdoor garbage bins do not require cleaning. In the unlikely case that any Chometz remains inside after collection, it will be minimal and completely inedible.

Areas being sold

Anything which is being included in the sale of Chometz does not require cleaning¹². Therefore as a way to minimise cleaning, toys and similar items can be sealed in cupboards and included in the sale of Chometz. Cupboards included in the sale of Chometz do not need to be cleaned.

Similarly if a person is moving out of their home for Pesach they are not required to clean. The Chometz in the home can be included in the sale of Chometz¹³.

Spring cleaning

Spring cleaning is a good thing to do from time-to-time, but with so much to do for Pesach, spring cleaning can be left for spring

(in the southern hemisphere) or done at another, less stressful and busy time.

The list below include things which are nice to do for spring-cleaning, but not required for Pesach cleaning. If they can be done as part of getting the house presentable for Yomtov, great. But they should not waste our time or be a cause for stress.

Steam-cleaning of carpets is not required. A thorough regular vacuuming is sufficient.

Washing curtains or blinds is not required. Kitchen or eating room curtains which have Chometz substance on them should be wiped or washed. Other curtains do not need washing.

Window cleaning is not required for Pesach. Similarly walls do not need cleaning, especially above the reaching height of young children. If any Chometz substance is stuck on walls such as in eating room, it should be removed. Kitchen walls near food areas and splashbacks do require thorough cleaning.

Dusting is not required. As they say, "dust is not Chometz".

A couple more things to keep in mind

Halachically it is problematic to complain about the hard work and effort Pesach requires. The Poskim explain that this was the question of the wicked son – What is this Avodah to you?¹⁴.

Simchas Yomtov is a Mitzvah Min Hatorah. We

should come to the Seder table feeling happy and alive not like a washed out Shmatteh.

Chumros are meant to be an expression of joy in serving Hashem. If they are causing resentment, please speak to your Rabbi.

We want our kids to enjoy and have a positive attitude to Yomtov and they should be involved in preparing. Stress and anger don't help create a positive atmosphere and anger is a serious Aveira.

We wish each other a Kosher un Freilichen Pesach. With our efforts to properly clean and prepare and with Hashem's help it will certainly be Kosher. By keeping things in perspective, it will hopefully be joyous as well.

1. Shulchan Aruch Harav 431:1-3
2. Ibid 442:30
3. ibid 433:13
4. ibid 433:14
5. Ibid 433:17
6. Ibid 433:28
7. Kuntres Acharon 442:18. It is recorded in the name of the Sfas Emes that tiny crumbs do not need to be removed as it is a Tircha Yseira which Chaza"l did not obligate us to do
8. See Nitei Gavriel Pesach 1:22:4 footnote
9. Ibid 22:5
10. Shulchan Aruch Harav 442:28
11. Ibid 442:32
12. Whilst there are those who question this where the sale only takes effect on the 14th of Nissan, Halachically accepted practise is as written within.
13. If a person will not be able to do Bedikas Chometz elsewhere, a small section of the home should be left out of the sale and Bedikas Chometz should be performed there.
14. Ibid 469:5

#Kollel Continues

Despite the closure of the physical building, Kollel and Limmud Hatorah must continue. Our Kollel Rabbis have been hard at work maintaining their learning schedules, community Chavrusas and shiurim at offsite locations, on the phone and via digital technology. We have also moved many of our shiurim online to live teleconferencing. Email kollel@yeshivahcentre.org to get details of this week's schedule.

