



KOF-K

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בס"ד

Cleaning for Pesach

by Rabbi Gissinger

Pesach - *Z'man Cheiruseinu* - is quickly approaching. **We are all anxiously and impatiently awaiting the arrival of the Seder nights in all their glory.** The entire family - father, mother and children - sitting around the lavishly laden table - discussing in depth the very foundation of our *emunah* – *YETZIAS MITZRAYIM*. Our anticipation grows stronger with every passing day. It's unbearable - we can no longer wait!!! Or can we?? I must sadly admit that I've heard people say, "Pesach is unbearable", "It's too hard", "Not worth the work". If my previous description of the *seder* doesn't seem to match yours - perhaps you're doing something wrong. I must elaborate a bit and I will occasionally quote and draw from the writings of HaRav HaGaon Rav Chaim Pinchos Scheinberg, *SHLITA*.

Obviously, the primary problem is the pre-Pesach cleaning, cleaning, and more cleaning. Unfortunately, the average housewife does 75% more cleaning than is required according to the halacha. Spring cleaning should be done after Pesach.

The following items **need not be washed** for Pesach: Windows, walls, carpets, ceilings, doors, and doorknobs. Linens, bedspreads, curtains, towels, fresh dish towels. For those who sell their *Chometz* - all pots, pans, dishes, flatware, appliances (e.g. mixer, grinder, toaster, microwave etc.) and toys, which are being stored away for Pesach, do not require cleaning.

The closet/room where *Chometz* and/or utensils are being locked up does not need to be cleaned for Pesach. Rather, merely take a quick assessment of the approx. amount of *Chometz* present there so that it may be properly listed among items being sold as *Chometz*.

Before beginning specific *halachos* regarding the preparation of the home and kitchen for Pesach I wish to make it clear that I have no intention of abolishing *Minhagim* which have been passed down by *Klal Yisroel* from generation to generation. After all, the *Shulchan Aruch* and later *poskim* commend Chumros (stringencies) for Pesach because *Yisroel Kadoshim Heim*. Nevertheless, some practices adopted by women today are not an actual continuation of those *minhagim*. Furthermore, one is not permitted to perform stringencies when they infringe upon and undermine basic Torah obligations. For example, as stated above, women are obligated in all the mitzvos of the Seder as men are. They also have the mitzvah of *Simchas Yom Tov* - enjoying the *Chag*. How can these be accomplished when they are totally washed out, exhausted and too tense to even maintain a conversation?! We must maintain our priorities!

Note: The rationale for some of the *halachos* stated below is based on the following premise; The obligation to search for and destroy *Chometz* applies to *Chometz* which is the size of one



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complete *k'zayis* (i.e. approx. the volume of one ounce. A standard whiskey cup holds one ounce) or more. According to some opinions even less than a *k'zayis* is problematic unless it is rendered unfit for human consumption. In consideration of that opinion, I have recommended, not required, (where applicable) to apply an ammonia/water solution to the *Chometz* thus rendering it inedible. Do not confuse this with *halacha* with the more stringent *issur* of consuming *Chometz*.

Clothing: Pockets of adult clothing (i.e. specifically those which during the year may have occasionally contained *Chometz*) and all children's clothing which will be worn on Pesach should be emptied of food and crumbs. **Alternatively, if one resolves not to put any food in pockets during Pesach - follow the rules in the following sentence regarding other clothing.** Pockets of other clothing – (not to be worn on Pesach) need only be frisked for either edible crumbs of *Chometz* (not little crumbs mixed with lint and dust) or a “considerable amount” of *Chometz*.

Note: a “considerable amount” equals a *k'zayis*. Should one decide on Pesach to wear clothing whose pockets were not thoroughly cleaned - food may not be put into those pockets. Note: Clothing which will not be worn on Pesach and will be in a sealed closet and sold with the *Chometz* - need not be checked at all.

Toys: a) Only those toys which may contain a “considerable amount” of *Chometz* must be cleaned of same. b) Toys which don't usually contain a “considerable amount” of *Chometz* but rather have small particles of slightly dirty *Chometz* stuck to them, may be used as is on Pesach. c) In the rare case that the small particles of *Chometz* appear to be in edible condition - although according to the view of most *poskim*, the toys may be used as is - care must be taken not to place those toys on areas where food is placed (e.g. tables, countertops etc). Furthermore, as stated above, some *poskim* rule that in this case the *Chometz* adhering to the toys should be rendered inedible. This may be accomplished in the following manner; 1) Waterproof toys may be soaked (in the tub) in the ammonia solution for a short time and then rinsed. By doing so, any *Chometz* which may have been stuck to the toys becomes inedible and is no longer considered *Chometz*. The toys may be dried and used as is. 2) Toys which can not be immersed in water can either be wiped with a sponge moistened with the ammonia solution as above, or the *Chometz* must be removed. **Note:** Any toys not being used on Pesach need not to be checked but rather they may be sold with the *Chometz*.

Seforim/Books: Since the only crumbs that might be present in *Seforim* or books are less than a *k'zayis*, these items do not have to be cleaned for Pesach. However, care must be taken not to place them on areas where food is placed (e.g. tables, countertops etc.). Nevertheless, to avoid any problems, *Seforim*/books which commonly have crumbs in them (e.g. *Bentchers*, etc.) should be cleaned or sealed away with the *Chometz*.



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For a complete Pesach cleaning guide based on the rulings of HaRav HaGaon Rav Chaim Pinchos Scheinberg, *SHLITA* contact the KOF-K 201-837-0500 ext 135.