

From Rabbi Michal Klayman Passover 2022



BEDIKAT CHAMETZ: SEARCHING FOR LEAVEN

Rabbi's note: *On the night before Passover (this year, April 14) we search the house for leaven. The Talmud writes about doing this search, 'to the light of the fourteenth of Nisan'. This means that on the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan (April 14), we conduct the search. **The light of the fourteenth etc.**, means the night of the fourteenth-with a ceremony conducted by candlelight. The search is mostly a symbolic one, since we have already cleaned our homes and apartments. **Bedikat Chametz/Searching for Leaven** not only satisfies what is written in the Torah; it can be a fun and memorable experience for children.*

- Take ten pieces of bread and place them around a specific room, like the kitchen. 'Search' for the bread with a candle [lights out]. One custom is for an adult to hide the bread and for children to search. Another custom is for the children to hide the bread with adults searching.

- Before searching, recite the following blessing:

Barukh atah Adonay, Elohaynu melekh ha'olam, asher keedshanu b'meetzvohtav v'tzeevanu al bee'or chametz.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who has made us special through the commandments, commanding us to remove all *chametz/leaven*.

- After finding the pieces, search the entire house by candlelight. Again, the search is symbolic: Having the entire family walk around the house can be a memorable experience for our children.



- Recite the following prayer; nullifying all *chametz* in your possession:

Kal hameera d'eeka beershutee, d'lah chameetay ood'lah bee'ayr'tay, leh'heh'vay vahteel v'cha'sheev k'afrah d'ar'ah.

All *chametz* in my possession, which I have not seen or removed, or of which I am unaware, is hereby nullified and ownerless as the dust of the earth.

- To make it a little more fun, do not talk. Give some kind of sign when the ‘searcher’ is getting warm.
- Here is an idea, which was shared with me: In another room, place ten crackers, cookies or other sweets, which your children/grandchildren can find as a final *chametz* snack.
- The following morning (Friday, April 15), we symbolically burn the *chametz* from the night before. You can go into your backyard, for example, put the *chametz* on a paper plate or in tin foil, and briefly light on fire. When doing so, recite the following:

Kal chameera vah'chamee'ah d'eeka veershutee, dahchameetay ood'lah chameetay, d'vah'aretay oodlah vah'aretay, leevteel v'leh'heh'vay hefkayr k'ahfrah d'are'ah.

All *chametz* in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have removed it or not, is hereby nullified and ownerless as the dust of the earth.

