

## Overview

## Halacha Highlight

### Siman 432 Seif 2:

One may examine many houses with one *beracha*. If a homeowner chooses he may call together his family members for the recitation of the *beracha* and then disperse them to examine different places in the house relying upon the *beracha* recited by the homeowner. There is a custom to put out pieces of bread where the one searching for *chometz* will find them so that the *beracha* will not be in vain. However, if one does not put out the bread one may still recite the *beracha* since the intent of the *beracha* is to destroy *chometz* that may be found.

- ❖ There is a disagreement whether checking one's house and store requires two *berachos* or not. (M.B. 7)
- ❖ Even when other people assist in doing the search one should make sure to do some of the search himself since it is a greater *mitzvah* to do a *mitzvah* by oneself. (M.B. 8)
- ❖ One should only be assisted by those who are adult males who have reached the age of *mitvos*. (M.B. 8)
- ❖ If an agent is doing the search he should make the *beracha* as well. (M.B. 10)
- ❖ If one did not hear the *beracha* he should not be sent to search for *chometz* but if it is necessary he may be sent out and is not required to make another *beracha*. (M.B. 11)
- ❖ The *chometz* that one puts out should be hard so that it doesn't crumble and it should be placed out of the reach of children. (M.B. 12)
- ❖ Even though there are those who disagree with the custom recorded in Rema, Poskim support the practice. Arizal writes that one should put out ten pieces of bread but one must be careful not to lose track of one of the pieces. (M.B. 13)

### Putting out pieces of bread before the search for *chometz*

Rema Siman 432 Seif 2

נוהגים להניח פתיחי חמץ שימצאם הבדוק

The custom is to put out pieces of bread so that the one doing the search will find them

Kol Bo (סי' מ"ח) reports that in some places they have a custom to put pieces of bread in holes of their house so that the one searching for *chometz* will find the pieces and destroy them. The basis of the custom is the concern that if one does not find any *chometz* in his search the *beracha* may be a *beracha l'vatala*. Kol bo adds that he does not observe this custom. Maharil (הלי בדיקת חמץ) relates that the basis of the custom is to make sure that one will have *chometz* to burn so that he will remember to nullify his *chometz* at the time that he burns it. Chok Yaakov (סי"ק י"ד) suggests that the custom is based on a concern of human nature. If one begins to search for *chometz* and does not find anything he could become frustrated and this could lead him to become lazy regarding his search of the remainder of the house.

Sha'arei Teshuvah (סק"ג) writes that the pieces of bread that one puts out should be smaller than the volume of an olive so that if he cannot find one of the pieces of bread he would not violate the prohibitions of *בל יראה ובל ימצא*. On the other hand the combined volume of the ten pieces should be more than an olive's volume since according to some opinions one is not obligated to destroy *chometz* that is smaller than the volume of an olive.

According to some, the one who searches for *chometz* is the one who puts out the pieces of bread. The common custom, however, is that someone other than the one who will search for *chometz* puts out the bread. The rationale is that when the one who searches for *chometz* does not know where the pieces were placed he must do a thorough job searching for the *chometz* thus assuring an honest search (עי' פסקי תשובות אות ד').

*chometz* represents the yetzer hara, the infamous 'yeast in the dough' that prevents us from doing Hashem's will. This explains why we eradicate even the smallest amounts of *chometz* and why we must also actively search it out. This alludes to removing the evil from within us.

"But we must understand that a single blessing can cover many houses. This alludes to one sincere effort to come close to Hashem and change our ways in general. It is not always the right time to dredge up all of one's sins and work on each one. At times, we need only make one brochah, one sincere thought of teshuvah, in order to search out many houses. We remove vast quantities of filth with one genuine teshuvah, and rectify more than we can possibly fathom!"

זכרו תורת משה, ע' 69

## Stories to Share

### One Blessing

שייע תלי"ב, ב': "בברכה אחת יכול לבדוק כמה בתים..."

Every year, when the Rebbe burned his *chometz* in Belz, the chassidim knew it was an opportunity for deep introspection. His followers would crowd around and the Rebbe would give over a very inspiring Torah to arouse the assembled to teshuvah. During one such gathering, Rav Yissachar Dov of Belz gave over a Torah explaining a halachah on today's amud.

He said, "Our sages teach in hilchos Pesach that one blessing suffices for the search of several homes. The Ridvaz famously teaches a striking reason why the Torah has special requirements regarding *chometz*. Unlike most other prohibitions, we are required to hunt out and eradicate all *chometz*, since even owning *chometz* is a violation of the prohibition *לא יראה חמץ ולא יראה שאר בכל גבולך*. In addition our sages required both inspection and nullification for even a miniscule amount of *chometz* is prohibited.

"The Ridvaz explains this in light of the sages' teachings that