



## CREATING A CHAMETZ-FREE HOME



### When to search

The good-deed of the final searching for chametz (Bedikat chametz) is to be done on the night of the 14th of Nissan, the evening prior to the Seder. Why at night? Because in your home there are crevices, little corners that have to be illuminated by artificial light -- and artificial light works best at night. If your unavlibel that evening.

The search can be started earlier according to the laws of bedikat chametz. However, the blessing is only said on the night of the 14th. By the next morning 1030 am One should have nomore chomtez in huis/her postions, infact one should speakout "All chametz, leaven and leavened bread, that is in my possession which I have not seen, removed or is unknown to me, should be annulled and considered ownerless like the dust of the earth."

Any place chametz might have been put during the year must be searched. Therefore, one must also check one's pockets.

### 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 yeraeh 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. These are the two things the Torah requires us to get rid of.

There's a more intuitive difference between the two. Chametz is food. If there is anything a human being doesn't eat, then it is not chametz, because by definition chametz must be food. On the other hand, nobody eats se'or -- old sourdough. Se'or is 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 according to Jewish law 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 According to Jewish law not regarded as se'or and is therefore not a problem on Passover.

To review the three categories:

- 1) Chametz is edible stuff made of fermented grain. It's edible by human standards.
- 2) Se'or is non-edible, but 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. In such a case, you do not have to get rid of it.