



Checking For Chametz

Masechet Pesachim open with the laws regarding checking for *chametz*. The second *Mishnah* teaches that after checking one room, we need not be concerned that a *chulda* (weasel) dragged some *chametz* from elsewhere into the room that was just checked. Similarly, one need not be concerned that after cleaning their house that a *chulda* brought *chametz* from another house. The *Mishnah* explains that this is because if we were concerned then *ein ledavar sof* - "there would be no end". In other words, if we were concerned that *chametz* may be dragged from place to place, then checking for *chametz* would be impossible. The *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that one could allay the concern that *chametz* was dragged from one place to another within the house, by coordinating a team of people to check all the rooms at the same time. Nevertheless, being concerned for that scenario would mean that one would need to be concerned that perhaps *chametz* was taken from house to house, or *chatzer* to *chatzer*. Coordinating that all houses are checked at the same time would be impossible.

The *Sfat Emet* (*Eiruv* 9a) finds the *Mishnah* difficult. The *Mishnah* implies, that if there was "an end", then one would need to be concerned that the room one checked, might later have *chametz* in it. In other words, without *ein ledavar sof*, one would need to rule stringently and require rechecking unless all the rooms were checked simultaneously. If that is that case, why is *ein ledavar sof* a valid justification for checking one room at a time enough? The *Sfat Emet* also asks, that on a biblical level, *bitul*, annulling all the *chametz* in one's possession, is enough. The requirement to check is rabbinic. That being the case whether the *chulda* dragged in *chametz* is a doubt regarding a rabbinic law for which one can rule leniently even without *ein ledavar sof*.

The *Sfat Emet* answers the indeed *bitul* would be sufficient on a biblical level. The *Chachamim* however required *bitul*, either because they were concerned one would not do a wholehearted *bitul* (*Ran*) or in case one finds a nice portion

of *chametz* on *Pesach* and eats it by mistake (*Tosfot*). The *Sfat Emet* explains that *ein ledavar sof* meant that had we been concerned for the *chulda*, then it would undermine this rabbinic law; it would be impossible to implement. Consequently, it is not due to a doubt related to rabbinic law, but rather it was built into the rabbinic law from the outset that one does not need to be concerned for the involvement of the *chulda*.

The *Sfat Emet* continues that this explanation answers the question posed by the *Tosfot*. The *Tosfot* ask that the ruling in our *Mishnah* appears unnecessary. The first *Mishnah* already taught that one does not need to check rooms into which *chametz* is not ordinarily brought. The *Mishnah* already implies that one need not be concerned that *chulda* dragged *chametz* into those location. Consequently, we already know we do not need to be concerned for a *chulda* taking *chametz* from place to place.

The *Sfat Emet* answers that the reason behind each *Mishnah* is different. The reason behind the first *Mishnah* is because the *Chachamim* were not stringent to require a person to check in this case of a *safek* (doubt). In our *Mishnah* however, the reason why one need not be concerned for the *chulda* was because it was not built into the original *gezeira*. Furthermore, based on the first *Mishnah* alone one might think that you need to a team of people to check all rooms at the same time considering it is a location in to which *chametz* was brought. In other words, the first *Mishnah* simply teaches that *bedika* is not required in places where *chametz* is not brought. In a house however, that already has the obligation to check for *chametz*, one might have thought that one needs to be concerned that a *chulda* might ruin the inspection. Consequently, our *Mishnah* teaches that that concern was not built into the original *gezeira*.

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Revision Questions

עירובין י: יי-ט"ו

- Explain the debate regarding whether one can use a latch with a weighted ball at the end to bolt a door shut. (י: יי)
- Where does *R' Yehuda* permit the use of a latch (*neger*) that is attached (but not hanging) to the door by a chain? (י: ייא)
- Which door hinge does the *Tana Kama* permit to be fixed in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* and why? (י: ייב)
- Which door hinge does *R' Yehuda* permit to be fixed outside the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* and why? (י: ייב)
- Are the *levi'im* allowed to fix the strings on their musical instruments in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* on *Shabbat*? (י: ייג)
- What other two cases appear in the same *Mishnah* that share the same laws as in the previous question? (י: ייג)
- On what condition can a *kohen* working in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* on *Shabbat* place a bandage on his finger? (י: ייד)
- What did they place on the ramp (*kevesh*) to prevent the *kohanim* from slipping? (י: ייד)
- Explain the debate regarding the preferable means of removing a dead *sheretz* found in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* on *Shabbat*. (י: יט)
- List the two opinions regarding where in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* it was appropriate to apply the solutions described in the previous question? (י: ט"ו)

פסחים א: א' – ב' א'

- When does one search for *chametz*? (א: א')
- What does one use to aid in his search? (א: א')
- Explain the opinions of *Beit Shammai* and *Beit Hillel* regarding the extent that one must search a storeroom full of barrels. (א: א')
- Why does the *Mishnah* state that "one need not be concerned that a weasel came and dragged away the *chametz*"? (א: ב')
- Till when should one search for *chametz*? (Include both opinions) (א: ג')
- Detail the schedule for *erev Pesach* (including cut off times) according to *R' Meir* and according to *R' Yehuda*. (א: ד')
- According to *R' Yehuda* what was the sign in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* that indicated the time on *erev Pesach* that one could eat *chametz*? (א: ה')
- What does *Rabban Gamliel* permit to be eaten during the fifth hour? (א: ו')
- According to *R' Channinah* which two objects were burnt together even though it effectively increased the level of *tum'ah* in one of the objects? (א: ו')
- What case does *R' Akiva* add similar to the previous question? (א: ו')
- What does *R' Meir* try to deduce from the above described opinions of *R' Channinah* and *R' Akiva*? (א: ז')
- Who argues with *R' Meir* on this point? (א: ז')
- After the time on *erev Pesach* when it is forbidden to eat *chametz*, can one use *chametz* to fuel their oven? (א: ח')
- Describe the two opinions regarding what constitutes *biur chametz*? (א: ט')

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
19 March כ"ט אדר	20 March ל"א אדר	21 March י"א ניסן	22 March כ"ב ניסן	23 March א' ניסן	24 March ב' ניסן	25 March ג' ניסן
Pesachim 2:2-3	Pesachim 2:4-5	Pesachim 2:6-7	Pesachim 2:8-3:1	Pesachim 3:2-3	Pesachim 3:4-5	Pesachim 3:6-7

