



THE
PRESENTABLE
PASSOVER

A SIMPLE, COMMON SENSE GUIDE TO GETTING
READY FOR PASSOVER AS BEST YOU CAN

BY AIMEE MORROW

LEAVEN: WHAT IS IT?

Leaven is defined as a substance that causes the fermentation and expansion of dough or batter, typically in the form of yeast or baking powder. That's pretty straight forward if you ask me. It's what makes breads and cakes fluffy and airy and delicious and generally irresistible to us year round. This isn't a bad thing, but in the lead up to Passover it's something we must think about in both a literal and abstract sense, and then do without.

HELLO, SWEETNESS!

The word *chametz* is a lovely little verb that literally means 'to leaven'. It also means 'to sour'. Think about bread for a moment. Yeah, it's yummy and light, but it also has that hint of sourness, right? Now think about matzo. There is no sourness there, no bitterness, just that little hint of sweetness.

Now let's think of this sourness in the context of, say, Luke 12:1. Go read it, I'll be right here.

Why would we want that sourness, that bitterness, of that leaven when we can have the sweetness of Messiah?

Just a thought.

KVETCHING IN EARNEST

Let's be honest, we've all complained about the store bought matzo that's become a staple of Seder tables in modern times. We've done everything we can to make it "edible", from slathering it with peanut butter to melting chocolate chips over top of it to attempting to turn it into pizza. Yet, the kvetching continues. Honestly, if we just look back at Torah, this is just par for the course. But let me tell you something crazy: it doesn't have to be.

Of course we take the time in our Seder to point out the similarities of the mass produced cracker to the wounds inflicted to our Messiah. It's a wonderful teaching tool, and it gets me every time.

How easy it is to complain about what we are commanded to eat when it is designed to remind us of our own redemption.

Let that sink in a moment.

BEGINNING THE SEARCH

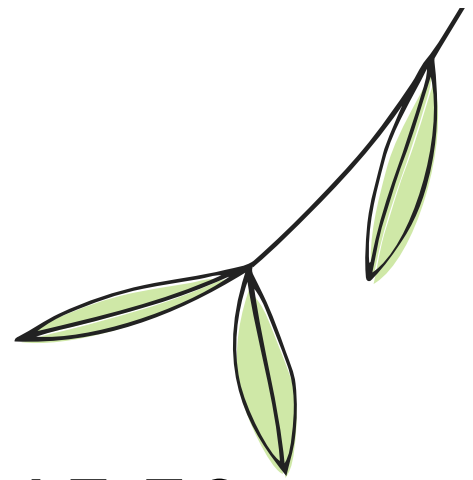
Read the labels. Read all the labels.

Even if you've been keeping Kosher for years or are only just beginning, label reading should be familiar territory. Needless to say, this territory extends to finding what's Passover friendly and what isn't. So, just remember: when in doubt, check the label.

A quick Google search for a list of Kosher for Passover items or non-Kosher for Passover items can easily send you down into a black hole filled with thousands of opinions and numerous doctrines. So, my advice? Skip Google and keep things simple. Remember, we're looking for yeast and yeast in a Biblical context.

Of course looking at the Biblical context in a modern world provides its share of difficulties. So, what do we do other than assume the fetal position and cry in a corner? We do the most obvious thing we can: we pray about it and ask for guidance and do the very best we can. Goodness knows we're all trying, and we're all trying a bit differently from one another, but we're going to get there in the end.

So, stop and take a breath, maybe visit your prayer closet, and then tackle your pantry and fridge.



WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Yeast
- Baking Soda
- Baking Powder
- Cream of Tartar
- Sodium Bicarbonate
- Leavening (Yep. Straight up leavening.)
- Self rising flour

The list above looks short, but these are the heavy hitters when it comes to leavening and are the ones that you are most likely to see on the ingredients lists of things you regularly buy. If I listed every single leavening agent there was you'd be in that fetal position I mentioned earlier, trust me. Just remember what I said: Biblical context.

Take note that I did not mention autolyzed yeast extract. That's because it's not a leavening agent. Autolyzed yeast extract is a flavoring (think vanilla extract) and is commonly used as a substitute for the dreaded MSG.



WHERE IS IT?

Oh leaven. Pesky, pesky leaven. It's almost like pollen in that it's practically everywhere. You think I'm joking, don't you? Nope. Not a chance. This stuff is absolutely where you least expect it. Sound familiar? Let's try this on for size:

Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

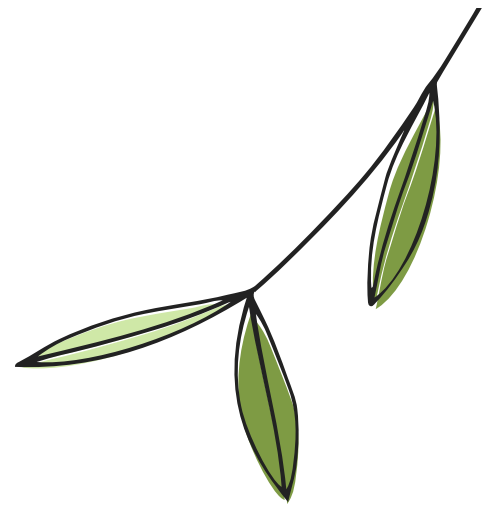
1 Corinthians 5:7-8 NASB

I don't know about you, but it seems to me that we have some cleaning to do.

THE ABSTRACT

We can go on and on about the leaven in our cabinets and the crumbs in our couch cushions until we're blue in the face. But if we do that, we've missed the point.

Remember, Messiah dwells within us. That simple concept makes our bodies a temple, a house. Simple logic dictates that we keep our house clean. Now's the time to get rid of the leaven that's hiding deep within the nooks and crannies of our beings so that His light can fully shine.



THE LITERAL

When talking about the literal sense of leaven we're going to go briefly back to my pollen analogy: it's everywhere. You can work yourself ragged trying to get it all out of your house and still miss some. I can speak from experience on this. This is the part where I revisit a statement I made on the previous page as I outline what we're going to do: we're going to pray about it, we're going to ask for guidance, and we're going to do our very best.

We can only be a Martha so many times in our lives before we realize that we have to sit down and be a Mary. I'm pretty sure I need that plastered on a wall somewhere as a reminder.



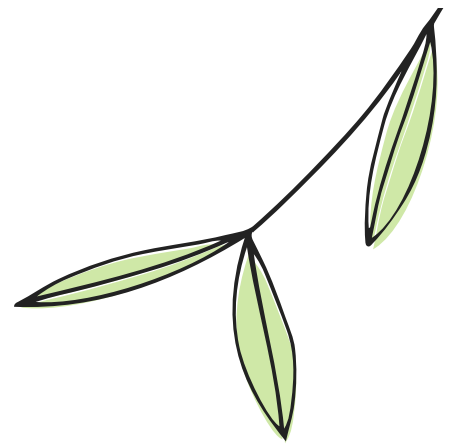
THE NITTY GRITTY

Spring Cleaning can be an extreme sport if you try...

Many people, myself included, use the season of Passover cleaning as an opportunity to go through the house and get rid of things that are no longer needed, no longer fit, or are just worn out. It's also a fantastic time to do a good old fashioned deep clean. Are there requirements? Not at all. But, I thought I'd include a deep clean checklist just to give you a template to work from.

This is where you take all of the information I've thrown at you and tailor it for the needs of your household. Go nuts! Or not. Totally up to you. Maybe start brainstorming for next Passover, scheduling time weeks in advance to go through certain areas of your house one at a time.

No matter what you do, I suggest working with background music. It always makes dull tasks more fun and if an impromptu praise and worship session breaks out, even better.

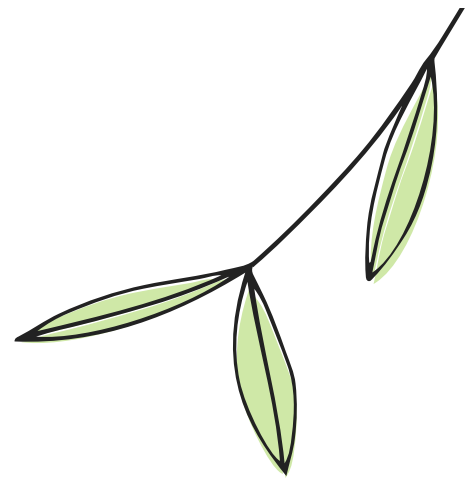


THE LIST

- Dust every surface (including walls, ceiling fans, and light fixtures)
- Vacuum carpets & upholstery
- Wash bedclothes & linens
- Wash curtains (including shower curtains)
- Change air filters
- Shampoo rugs & carpets (as needed)
- Clean out the lint trap of your dryer (deep clean if necessary)
- Clean stove top & oven
- Clean microwave
- Clean out fridge & freezer
- Clean out pantry
- Vacuum out kitchen drawers and cabinets (you wouldn't believe the crumbs that can accumulate)
- Clean kid's rooms (check their pockets, too!)
- Clean out your car (you've already got the vacuum out)
- Clean windows & windowsills
- Clean out and organize your papers & files
- Swap out seasonal clothing
- Deep clean bathrooms
- Take any donations to designated drop off points
- Clean front door & exterior windows
- Take your pets to the groomer for a bath, or take your chances and do it yourself



BAKING SODA: HOW TO USE IT BEFORE YOU TOSS IT



And y'all thought baking soda was just for making dessert...

Feel bad about throwing out that 50¢ box of baking soda when you've barely made a dent in it? I know how you feel. So why not utilize it before the final leaven toss? You already have it on hand and, combined with other household ingredients, it makes for a nice, natural cleaning agent.

To clean your microwave:

- * Add 2 tablespoons of baking soda to 1 cup of water.
- * Microwave on high for 2-3 minutes, uncovered. The steam will help deodorize and loosen up any caked on gunk inside.
- * Wipe clean.

To clean tough grease spots:

- * Sprinkle the offending surface with baking soda.
- * Fill a spray bottle with white vinegar and spray over the surface.
- * Let the bubbles do their stuff for 10-15 minutes before wiping clean with a damp cloth.

To unclog drains:

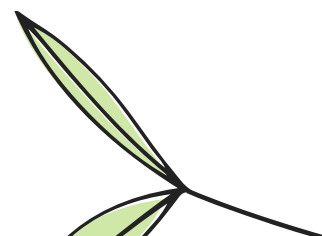
- * Break up and loosen the clog with a plunger before pouring a pot of boiling water down the drain.
- * Sprinkle 1/2 - 3/4 c. of baking soda down the drain and let sit for 3-5 minutes.
- * Mix a 1:1 ratio of boiling water and white vinegar. Pour it down the drain and let sit for 5-10 minutes.
- * Follow with another pot of boiling water.

ABOUT FACE

Baking Soda Facial Scrub

- * 1/3 c. baking soda
- * 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- * 5-10 drops Frankincense essential oil (optional)
- * 5 drops of Tea Tree essential oil (optional)

Combine all ingredients and store in an airtight jar. Apply 1-2 tsp. to your skin in small, circular motions. Rinse with warm water and pat dry.



OH MATZO

Now, what if I told you that the mass produced, store bought matzo wasn't a necessity? Because it's not. Sure, it does the job, but making your own is easy and has that wonderful sweetness that I mentioned earlier.

It also makes a great pizza crust.

PROCESS

- Preheat your oven to 375.
- Combine oil, honey, & eggs in a large bowl and mix well. Add salt and cold water. Refrigerate this mixture if needed.
- Add 4 cups of flour and fold in using a silicone spatula. Mix until stiff and sticky (like Silly Putty). Add more flour if needed.
- Turn out onto a lightly floured sheet of parchment paper & divide into 3 pieces. Roll each piece into a large rectangle.
- Cut into squares & pierce with a fork before placing onto a greased cookie sheet.
- Thin bake 10-11 min.
- Medium bake 13-14 min.
- Thick back 15-20 min.
- The matzo should be golden brown and stored in an airtight container.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tsp. salt
- 3 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 6 - 6 1/2 cups all purpose flour