

Chametz After Pesach

Rabbi Alfred S. Cohen

The halachic requirements regarding the Festival of Passover are many and complex. For centuries rabbinic scholars have expended great diligence and ingenuity in studying the Law and following its many stipulations to their practical conclusions. The fine points of Pesach regulations have occupied the greatest minds of Judaism; every observant Jewish household is witness to the major impact the laws of Passover have upon the Jewish lifestyle.

But one of these many laws was usually accepted as a fairly simple rule, almost in the nature of a postscript to the complex regulations concerning *chametz* and matzo. That rule states that any *chametz* which was in the possession of a Jew during Pesach may not be used after Pesach at all. In days gone by, there was not much trouble in observing this Law — in close-knit Jewish communities where virtually everyone strictly observed all the minutiae of the Passover regulations, the identity of the few individuals who did not destroy or somehow get rid of their *chametz* was known to all, and everyone in town would scrupulously avoid buying foodstuffs from them or using any of their foods.

Today, however, not only the social dispersion of the Jewish community but also the highly sophisticated economic environment in which most of us operate have transformed this once simple and straightforward regulation into a practice of bewildering

*Rabbi, Young Israel of Canarsie; Instructor of
Talmud, Yeshiva University High School for Boys*

complexity. In modern times many Jews are non-observant, and it is not always easy to gauge the extent of their commitment to Passover laws; furthermore, many businesses are not owned by individuals but are organized as corporations. What effect will that have on the observance of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*, the laws concerning *chametz* owned by a Jew during Passover? Another bizarre complication is presented by the growing number of Jews who *do* sell their *chametz* before Pesach but nevertheless continue to keep their stores open during Pesach and sell (the ostensibly sold) *chametz* to their customers.

The halachot of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*, *chametz* which was in the possession of a Jew during Pesach, warrant our re-examination: to what extent do conscientious Jews have to take measures to assure that they do not inadvertently transgress this stricture, and what, if any, modification do the complex modern economic structures entail?

Prior to addressing this complex issue, a brief outline of the sources would be most helpful.

Chametz she'avar alav haPesach is a concept which first appears in the Mishna¹,

חמץ של נכרי שעבר עליו הפסח מותר בהנאה ושל ישראל אסור
בהנאה.

Chametz which belonged to a Gentile during Pesach, one may derive benefit from it; but *chametz* of a Jew (which remained in his possession over Pesach) is forbidden, for the Torah says no leavening may be in your possession.²

In the Gemara, this statement occasions a disagreement between Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Shimon. According to Rabbi Yehudah, the origin of the rule concerning *chametz* in the possession of a Jew during Pesach is biblical, and if one does eat this *chametz* after Pesach, he has violated a negative

1. משנה פסחים כח

2. Both Rambam המשניות and the Rav miBartinoro in their commentaries question the addition of the word הנאה since *chametz* of a non-Jew should be allowed even for אכילה. In this connection they discuss a text in the Yerushalmi פסחים פרק ב משנה ב'

The *chametz* of a non-Jew is permitted after Pesach, even for eating; but that of a Jew, which remained in his

7. א. אר"ח תמ"ח - The lenient ruling applies likewise to *chametz* not owned by anyone (*hefker*), since no one thereby violated the *issur* of בל יראה.

possession over Pesach, even if he left it over by mistake or against his will, is forbidden⁸.

The "*k'nas*" for *chametz she'avar alav haPesach* seems to be considerably more severe than other fines⁹, but the Gemara teaches that the fine is levied only on *chametz* which is in its pristine state, not on that which is mixed with other substances¹⁰. Furthermore, the "mixture" in this case would only have to contain one part of *chametz* to six parts of other ingredients. The guideline is that there must be less than a *K'zayit* בכרי אכילת פרס¹¹. As an example, let us consider ketchup, which contains vinegar. Assuming that the vinegar in the product is of grain derivative and therefore *chametz*, the ketchup would nonetheless be permitted for consumption after Pesach if the vinegar constitutes less than one-sixth of the product.¹²

8. רדב"ז חלק ג תקפ"ט עין שם סי' ג. The law forever forbids using *chametz* which was in the possession of a Jew during Pesach, even if it belonged to him only for a minute, or even if he had it only on the eighth day, which day is not biblically ordained but is rather a rabbinic addition. The commentaries to *Pesachim* 30a note that when Ravva told the people that they could purchase *chametz* after seven days of Pesach, he meant the people in Eretz Yisrael, where there are only seven days of the Festival, and that in addressing people outside the Land, his intention was that they could buy *chametz* after the eighth day.

ד"ר חתם סופר או"ח קי"ד discusses the question of *chametz* which was owned by a Jew on Erev Pesach, but after noon (when it is already forbidden). See also the *Noda Biyehudah*, סי' ס"ג who writes that the *k'nas* was instituted only for that *chametz* which was in a Jew's domain at the conclusion of Pesach. Even if the Jew sold his *chametz* to the Gentile during the holiday, it would be permitted for eating; also, if the Jew were to die during the holiday, and the *chametz* no longer belonged to a Jew, it would similarly be permitted.

9. In most cases of *k'nas*, the item is forbidden to the sinner only, not to others (מריק יג), but in this case it is forbidden to all forever.
10. פסחים ל.
11. כף החיים תמ"ב אות ג. וראה משנה ברורה תמ"ב אות א שבסוף החמיר.
12. מבטלין איסור writes that one may dilute the *chametz* prior to Pesach so that it may be used after Pesach, and this is not considered *משנה ברורה* תניג אות כ. *Chafetz Chaim* also considers such a case and concludes that in case of great need one may rely on the lenient opinion and the *chametz* may be utilized. *ערוך השולחן* תמ"ז אות מ"ב rules that the amount needed to make *chametz* be considered null after Pesach is רוב, provided it was diluted after Pesach. See also מקראי קודש חלק ב סי' ע"ה.

A vexing question in connection with *chametz she'avar alav haPesach* is the not uncommon phenomenon of a storeowner's selling his *chametz* prior to the holiday but nevertheless continuing to sell his wares during Passover¹³. This happens when the storeowner is not personally an observant Jew and keeps his store open during Yom Tov itself. Are we to take this as an indication that there was no bona fide sale, and that it was never the intention of the Jew to actually sell his *chametz* before Pesach? Or should one argue that actually the sale is totally valid, but the storeowner, in selling *chametz* to his customers during Pesach, is stealing those goods from the Gentile to whom he has previously sold them?

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein has dealt with this issue a number of times¹⁴ and concluded that even the storeowner's "selling" of his wares during the holiday does not invalidate the sale of that *chametz* prior to Pesach; however, in addressing the same question at a later date, he does add a number of precautions¹⁵. Rabbi Feinstein urges the Rabbi in charge of the sale transaction before Pesach to instruct the storeowners that it is forbidden for them to deal in these products during the Festival and also that they may not purchase any new *chametz* during the Passover holiday. Furthermore, he rules that the Rabbi should not issue a letter advising the public that the owner sold his *chametz* and that it is permissible to buy there subsequent to Passover, since the owner might buy *chametz* during Pesach, and that is surely not covered by any sale executed before the holiday.

13. It is a fact that most organizations granting kashruth supervision or Rabbis executing the sale of *chametz* for stores do permit the stores to continue to operate during Passover. However, the © is currently working on changing its policy and in the future will not allow establishments under its supervision to remain open on Pesach to sell *chametz*.

It is also problematical if it is permissible to sell one's *chametz* to a non-Jew before Pesach (to be bought back after Pesach) if the item is truly total *chametz*. *Maase Rav* reports that the Vilna Gaon was opposed to such a sale; Rabbi J.B. Soloveichik has been reported as often urging that this practice be abandoned. Despite this, most people do continue to dispose of their *chametz* before Pesach in this fashion. The © and the Lubavitch Kashrut Supervision also allow true *chametz* to be sold by establishments under their supervision.

14. אגרות משה או"ח קמ"ט

15. אגרות משה או"ח חלק שני סי' צ"א

Apparently Rabbi Feinstein was not entirely satisfied with his earlier responsa, because he continues in a later responsum to probe the significance of the seller's intentions at the time of the original sale of the *chametz*¹⁶. In his latest *tshuva* on the subject to date, Rabbi Feinstein also considers the situation in which one is unsure after Pesach just which *chametz* was sold by the storekeeper to the non-Jew prior to Pesach and which of his merchandise might have been acquired in the course of Passover week¹⁷. If the consumer cannot determine when the entire stock of questionable *chametz* has been replenished — at what point may he resume shopping there, based on the principle ספק רבנן לקולא that one may be lenient in a case of doubt concerning a rabbinic regulation? He concludes that if a supermarket sold its *chametz* before Pesach but nevertheless continued to stay open during Pesach, sell *chametz*, and purchase new *chametz*, one should not buy there without being reasonably certain that at least half the *chametz* presently in the store was covered by the sale before Pesach. Otherwise, one should not buy there until all the *chametz* which was purchased during Pesach has been depleted. (This rule of thumb applies only to a large establishment where the workers have no vested interest in the sales volume; however, if the store is a small grocery owned and operated by a few individuals, they cannot be relied upon not to deceive the customers about the nature of their *chametz*, and one should not shop there until all the *chametz* which was in the store at any time during Pesach has been totally replenished.)

The volume of correspondence printed in the responsa of Rabbi Feinstein and the frequency with which he returns to the subject are indicative of the resistance which his point of view has met in rabbinic circles. Many rabbinic authorities hold that the subsequent selling of products during Pesach is a clear indication that the sale of *chametz* before Pesach was fraudulent and that the owner never in his own mind believed that he was transferring his property through the sale he engineered with the Rabbi. Therefore,

16. אגרות משה או"ח חלק שלישי צ"ה.

17. אגרות משה.

they contend that one should not patronize such establishments after Passover at all, until such time as one can be quite sure that none of the old stock remains.¹⁸

The *din* of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach* when that *chametz* is owned by a corporation presents a somewhat thorny problem. *Chametz* is liable to the rabbinic penalty if (a) it belonged to a Jew during Pesach or (b) if a Jew was responsible for it then (*achrayut*). Let us first address the latter requirement.

It is evident from a passage in *Pesachim* 5b that even if one does not own *chametz* on Pesach but had *achrayut* for it, that *chametz* is forbidden. In that context, the Gemara teaches,

Rava said to the people of Mehoza, "Get rid of the *chametz* in your houses which belongs to the soldiers [who apparently required the Jews to keep grain for the soldiers in their houses] because [even if it is not your property] if it were stolen you would be required to pay for it; therefore it is as if it were yours and is forbidden."

This Talmudic passage indicates that even *chametz* which one does not own but for which he is responsible is subject to the penalty of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*. How is this principle translated into the modern phenomenon of a corporation? It would seem that, by definition, owners of shares in a corporation have "limited liability", meaning that they do not have any personal responsibility for the *chametz* which the corporation might own.

However, while it is true that none of the shareholders in a corporation may be liable for the *chametz*, yet that fact alone would not necessarily render it permissible, for there is still the factor of ownership to be considered. To whom do the assets of the corporation belong? Does each stockholder own a little bit of the

18. See also מנהגים ש"ק ס' ר"ה - מגן אברהם תמ"ז דברי מלביאל חלק ד ס' כ"ד אות י

For a discussion regarding the question of whiskey owned by a Jew on פסח see
אבני נזר תקמ"ב אות ט"ו
משכנות יעקב יו"ד ל"ד
משנה ברורה תמ"ב סק"ד
שרה חמד כרך זח

chametz, or does the "corporation", a discrete entity, own it?¹⁹

After consultation with a lawyer, I was informed that actually the concept of a corporation in American jurisprudence would be difficult if not impossible to translate into precise halachic terminology. The closest conceptual analogy might be the "*kehillah*" (congregation). In Jewish law, the question arises as to ownership of an object which the *kehillah* possesses. It is evident from an inspection of the discussion in the Talmud and law codes²⁰ regarding a *lulav* and *ethrog* purchase by a *kehillah*, or a *Sefer Torah* owned by a *kehillah*, that each member of the congregation is considered as having ownership of a part of that community-owned object. Thus, the assets of a corporation could be considered, under Jewish law, as belonging in part to each person who owns stock in that corporation. Under the circumstances, the *chametz* owned by a corporation whose stockholders are (mainly) Jewish could be in the category of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*.

This question has not yet received a definitive answer by leading rabbinic authorities. The Kovner Rov did not accept the legal definition mentioned above. One may summarize his reasoning as follows: halacha accepts the principle that "*dina de'malchuta dina*", the law of the land is law (for monetary matters). Since the law of the secular state decrees that a corporation is indeed a distinct entity, that legal fiction is valid even as far as halacha is concerned. He would say that Jewish

19. Some people would like to draw a parallel from the laws of *ribit* to the laws of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*. R. Moshe Feinstein has written that it is permissible for Jews to own shares in a bank corporation which receives *ribit* because none of the shareholders has any liability (*achrayut*) in the corporation. However, the analogy is not entirely successful, for there are some pertinent differences between the two situations. The above citation by Rava indicates that even if a person does *not* own the *chametz* but is responsible for it, it is still his responsibility to remove all that *chametz* from his property before Pesach. And if the *chametz* belongs to him, even if he is not liable for any damage from that *chametz*, surely he must remove that *chametz* too!

We should note however, that for the Kovner Rav there was another element of difference which he considered to be highly relevant. See further in the text.

20. בבא בתרא מג, הלכות לולב תרנ"ח ס"ט.

stockholders do not own the *chametz* of the corporation because the corporation itself owns its assets. If the law of the land views the business as a corporate "body", then Jewish law should accept that definition. And furthermore, since there is also no liability on the part of the shareholders, we can say that the *chametz* of a corporation does not fall within the purview of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*.

However, Rav Brown in *Shearim Behalacha* cites the *Zechar Yitzchok* as rejecting this view.²² Albeit there is "limited liability" for the shareholders, nevertheless they *are shareholders*, which means that a share of the corporation belongs to each one; i.e. a share of the *chametz* too. Therefore he would not permit such *chametz* to be used by Jews after Pesach.

Most corporations are not wholly owned by Jews. How does "mixed" ownership affect the halachic status of corporation-owned *chametz*? Earlier Rabbis have addressed the question of *chametz* which was jointly owned by a Jew and non-Jew during Pesach; in such a partnership, the *chametz* of the Gentile is permitted but that which belonged to the Jew is forbidden. The Rabbis discuss how to determine which is which. *Sha'agat A'ryeh*²³ establishes the following principle:

There is a concept in rabbinic law called *breira*, which means that an action can retroactively affect the status of an object. For example, if a Jew and a Gentile jointly owned *chametz* during Pesach and later decided to divide their stock, the principle of *breira* establishes that the *chametz* which is taken by the Gentile as his share after Pesach was really his all during Pesach and that the part subsequently claimed by the Jew was retroactively his all along. Since the point in question is a rabbinic and not a biblical issue, *Sha'agat A'ryeh* rules that, based on *breira*, one may use the *chametz* which was jointly owned by both and then taken by the Gentile as his — but the part claimed by the Jew is considered as having been in his domain all along is and therefore forbidden as

22. אי"ח שם.

23. שו"ת שאגת אריה פט"צא

chametz she'avar alav haPesach.²⁴

Sefer Brit Yehudah wants to expand this application of *breira* even to a case where the owners do not eventually split up their stock. He would say that whenever Jews and Gentiles together owned *chametz* during Pesach, the buyer can ascribe the *chametz* which he buys to the portion which the Gentile owned on *Pesach*.²⁵

How does the principle of *breira* apply with respect to a corporation? And how can the principle of *breira* be employed in cases where the "partners" do not divide their stock but remain joint owners? *Sefer Brit Yehudah*²⁶ enters into a long discussion of this question and notes that the first person to grapple with this modern issue was Rabbi Shlomo Ganzfried, the author of *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*. Rabbi Ganzfried wrote that it is forbidden by Jewish law for a Jew to borrow money to be repaid at interest from a bank (a corporation) which has Jewish as well as non-Jewish shareholders²⁷ *Sefer Brit Yehudah* further notes that the author of *Shoel Umayshiv* took strong exception to this ruling and importuned Rabbi Ganzfried to omit this section in later reprintings of his *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*. *Shoel Umayshiv* held that there was no violation involved in paying or receiving interest from a corporate bank; similarly, he found no *issur* in buying *chametz* from a corporation which held it during Pesach.

However, *Sefer Brit Yehudah* proceeds to cite many authorities who did not agree with *Shoel Umayshiv*²⁸. He goes so far as to maintain that even those Rabbis who did render lenient opinions

24. See also ערוך השלחן תמ"ח אות ב

25. ספר ברית יהודה פרק ל"ג - מלמד להועיל חלק ב ט"ס

26. פרק ל אות ג

27. עין שואל ומשיב שהביא מקש"ע חלק ג קמ"א ס' ל"א

28. *Sefer Brit Yehudah* also discusses the possible differences in halacha if the clerk is a Jew. In footnote 47 of ספר ברית יהודה the author directs the reader to chapter 2, which examines the question of a Jewish part-owner of a bank accepting a share of the profits made on a loan extended to a Jew. One should note that banks owned by Jews commonly employ the *heter iska* to avoid the manifold problems arising out of this situation. See "Ribit: A Halachic Anthology" by Joseph Stern in *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society*. No. IV, for a fuller explication of the *heter iska*. Of course, the *heter iska* has no bearing whatsoever on the question of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*.

about *chametz* did so only in an attempt to find retroactive justification for the Jews involved, but never to sanction such an act a priori.

In his discussion of the laws of *chametz*, Rabbi Shlomo Kluger²⁹ also rules that shareholders of a corporation do not need to be concerned about corporate ownership of *chametz* during Pesach. As he sees it, the individual shareholder has no actual control over the daily workings of the business; his stock "entitles him only to gain or to lose money but gives him no right to instruct or to give opinions about the operations of the business..." Inasmuch as this is so, he considers the obligation to get rid of all *chametz* prior to Pesach as not applicable to a corporation.

The commonly accepted practice today is to regard a supermarket corporation in the same way as one would consider a privately-owned store. If the corporation is primarily owned by Jewish stockholders, all the strictures which apply to any Jewish establishment would apply to the corporation. However, if more than half the shareholders are non-Jewish, one may conclude that the *chametz* was owned on Pesach by a non-Jew and is permitted. However, some authorities consider the pertinent factor in a corporate situation to be who is the ultimate policy-maker. If, despite multiple owners, the corporation is basically run by a Jewish manager, then we must regard the store as being a Jewish establishment.³⁰

An interesting footnote to our inquiry is the practical observation that, regardless of the considerable doubt as to any actual halachic *issur* in using *chametz she'avar alav haPesach* due to the complexities of modern economics, most observant Jews nevertheless adopt a strict posture with respect to this question. Despite any *heterim* which might apply to corporate supermarkets

29. האלף לך שלמה רל"ח.

30. אגרות משה או"ח חלק ד צ"ו.

For a discussion on the question of bankruptcy of a corporation and how it affects the officers of the corporation, see משנה הלכות חלק ו רע"ז.

and the like, they customarily avoid buying in Jewish controlled supermarkets for weeks, if not months, after Passover.

* * *

A halachic topic which is not actually part of the question of *chametz* may nevertheless render much of our discussion of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach* moot in practical usage. Many only nominally observant Jews, and even some who are not otherwise observant of mitzvot, are nevertheless careful to sell their *chametz* to a Gentile before Pesach. It may be that an individual who so blatantly disregards the halacha that he does not even bother to sell his *chametz* or otherwise dispose of it has passed beyond the definition of "Jew" for the purposes of the Jewish law. The legal status of a non-observant Jew — whether he is to be considered as a Jew or as a Gentile for the purposes of legal categorization — is a self-contained topic which is ancillary to the laws of Pesach. The resolution of this question has important repercussions in many areas of Jewish law.³¹ (It is interesting to note parenthetically that although the reason for the Jew's lack of observance is often an important factor in determining his status, none of the rabbinic authorities who discuss this question in connection with Pesach touch on this aspect of it at all³². Usually, it does make a difference if the Jew who disregards the law is acting deliberately or out of ignorance, like a "babe who was kidnapped by Gentiles.")

31. Some of the areas in which this question is important include the following:
 - his participation in an *eruv* — אר"ח שפ"ה
 - can a Jew ask him to work for him on Shabbat, אר"ח תקכ"ו
 - what is the status of an animal which he slaughtered, יו"ד ט"ב
 - bread and cheese prepared by him, יו"ד קט"ו וקכ"ד
 - can a Jew borrow or lend money at interest from him יו"ד קנ"ט
 - can he contract a valid marriage, is a Sefer Torah written by him permitted and other matters, תרומת הדשן רכ"ד.
32. טור אבן העזר פרק מד
 - 157:4 אבן העזר
 - סנהדרין מד ישראל אף על פי שחטא ישראל
 - ערוך השלחן אבן העזר מד
 - חזון איש אר"ח ל"ט כ"ד, אבן העזר קי"ח ו
 - אגרות משה אר"ח כ"ג - אבן העזר ב ב
 - בנין ציון כ"ג

In connection with *chametz* during Pesach, the authorities disagree whether a Jew who did not dispose of his *chametz* should be considered equivalent to a Gentile, based on the principle מומר לחלל שבת הוא כעכו"ם "one who deliberately violates the Sabbath is like an idol-worshipper", or whether we should follow the dictum that "a Jew, even if he sins, is yet a Jew."

Another factor to be considered is that the stricture against using *chametz* kept by a Jew during Passover is after all a rabbinic *k'nas*, a fine instituted in the hope that by removing any opportunity for profit from the illicit *chametz*, we have removed the temptation not to sell it. But what value is such a *k'nas* in the case of a non-observant Jew who is probably not even aware of it? He has no difficulty selling his *chametz* after Pesach to non-Jews and the only ones being inconvenienced are the observant Jews! Why then should the *k'nas* continue to be imposed?

In one of his responsa, *Shoel Umayshiv* records the case of a Jew who had sold his *chametz* to an individual whom he believed to be non-Jewish. During *chol hamoed*, however, he was informed by the man's wife that her spouse had been born Jewish but had converted. *Shoel Umayshiv* ruled that there is no problem with the *chametz*, and it may be used just as if it had been sold to any other Gentile.³³

But former Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel, Ovadia Yosef, writes³⁴

...and in general from their words we learn that it is forbidden to buy after Pesach from a non-observant Jew who does not keep Torah and mitzvot.

After elaborating on his conclusion, Rabbi Yosef confronts the text in *Chulin*³⁵ which apparently contradicts his thesis:

Chametz of sinners is permitted immediately after Pesach because they exchange it...

33. שואל ומשיב כרך ג חלק שני סי' ס.

See also הר צבי סמ"י.

34. ערוך השולחן תמח"א. See also יחזקאל דעת חלק ג סי' כח.

35. משנה ברורה אות ה and רש"י ד"ה מותר. חולין ד יד.

Although the implication seems to be that *chametz* retained by a non-observant Jew during Pesach may be used, Rabbi Yosef counters that the Gemara is considering the case of an individual who has sinned, but after discovering his error wishes to avoid further transgression and therefore exchanges his own *chametz* for some other. This follows the reasoning that **לא שביק היתרא ואכיל איסורא** a person will not ordinarily ignore the permitted and deliberately eat a forbidden food. However, Rabbi Yosef maintains that in our time, any Jew can readily sell his *chametz*, and if he deliberately chooses not to do so, he cannot be considered as within the category of one who avoids—sin if he can. We cannot therefore ascribe to him the wish to avoid compounding his sin, nor can we assume that he will have exchanged his forbidden, unsold *chametz* for some other³⁶.

In **באר היטב תמ"ח י"א** there is further definition of the general dictum that a person prefers the permitted and avoids the forbidden. He writes that the rule only applies to a person who sins **בתיאבון**, due to temptation which he is unable to resist. We may indeed assume that under ordinary circumstances when it is just as easy for him, he will prefer the permitted and avoid the forbidden. However, if one sins **להכעיס** deliberately, he is not entitled to this presumption of good will. However, **באר היטב** cites rabbinic authorities who feel that in a case of great need, it might be permissible to utilize the money realized from sale of the *chametz* owned by the deliberate sinner to a non-Jew, or else to exchange it for *chametz* of a non-Jew. This ruling is cited by the *Mishnah Brurah*.³⁷

Our brief perusal of this topic serves to indicate the surprisingly complex nature of *hilchot chametz she'avar alav haPesach*. Many of these questions still await final halachic resolution.

36. Rabbi Yosef adds that even if the storeowner claims to have sold his *chametz* he is not to be believed without a signed certificate from the Rabbi attesting to the sale.

37. **או"ח תמ"ח**