

Leaven on Passover in Quantum Torah

By Ariel Bar Tzadok
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There is an interesting issue with regards to the laws of Passover that sharply divide the two communities of Torah observant Jews, commonly known as the European Ashkenazim and the Middle Eastern Sephardim. With regards to leavened products on Passover, all agree that these are Biblically prohibited throughout the entire holiday. There is no disagreement on this fundamental point.

However, what is the Law regarding a product that might contain a small amount of leaven? At what ratio is the amount of leaven in a product considered null and void, therefore allowing the product to be consumed during Passover? The answer to this question follows the traditional Law of the nullification of forbidden mixtures as outlined by the Torah Sages over many centuries. The general rule is that the ratio for nullification is 60 to 1. In other words, if there is 60 times the amount of the forbidden item in a mixture of otherwise permitted items, then its presence is considered insignificant and therefore, null and void. This is the general rule applied in almost all cases of Torah Law regarding the mixture of permitted foods with forbidden additives.

Now, with regards to Passover, all leavened products, no matter how great or how small are forbidden throughout the entire holiday. During the holiday if even the smallest amount of leaven becomes mixed into a non-leavened food, then the entire mixture cannot be consumed during the Passover holiday. All opinions are in agreement with this as well. However, now we come to the major disagreement. What if before Passover there is a non-leavened product that had mixed into it a leavened product of a small proportion that is nullified in the 60 to 1 ration. Being that this happened before the Passover, before the time of the prohibition of leaven begins, what is the law regarding this mixture?

According to the Sephardim, once the leaven is nullified in a 60 to 1 ratio with non-leavened items, the leaven is null and void and remains such, whether during Passover or not. Once the mixture is properly permitted, it stays that way, period. The Ashkenazim on the other hand have a completely different view of this. They insist that regardless of any previous nullification, any such forbidden mixture, regardless of how small the leavened additive may be is reactivated and forbids the entire mixture, even if it was originally nullified and declared acceptable. In the original Hebrew, this concept is called *Hozer V'Niyur* (return and reactivate).

In other words, from the Ashkenazi point of view even the most miniscule percentage of a leavened product is activated in a larger non-leavened mixture and turns the entire mixture into a leavened state, thus prohibited on Passover. Needless to say, the Sephardim say that no such reality exists. They insist that once it is nullified in 60, it stays nullified and no longer has any power to "return and reactivate."

So now, who is right? Is this a question of philosophy or Biblical interpretation or can it be scientifically analyzed to ascertain whether or not such a miniscule amount of a so-called leavened product actually does reactivate and spread leavening throughout such a entire, larger mixture? I do believe that a scientific analysis can be performed and its conclusions would be definitive and final. However, this does not mean that scientific fact and reality would in any way be authoritative to have any influence over an argument in Torah Law to either permit for forbid such mixtures nullified according to the 60 to 1 ratio.

How is it that scientific reality that proves things one way or another can have no real relative value in settling an argument that essentially is based on two different perceptions of reality? Either the leaven returns and reactivates or it does not. It cannot do both simultaneously, or can it?

The answer to this question is that actually yes it can. There can be and essentially there are two separate and distinct sets of reality for the same facts. And how can this be? The answer is because, like everything else in existence, the Torah and its Laws exist in a quantum universe.

The law of quantum physics state that reality when observed tends to align with the perceptions of the observer. As such, not only is beauty in the eye of the beholder, so too is reality. Therefore, when an Ashkenazi views the reality of the 60 to 1 mixture, nullified before Passover and allowed at that time, once it comes to Passover, he can only see a forbidden mixture. Nothing in science can prove to an adherent of this view that it is wrong or unfounded. Somehow and in some way, his reality is valid, real and not subject to change.

The same can be true of the other side of the discussion. The Sephardi will see a clearly permitted state with absolutely no reality of prohibition, entirely the opposite of his Ashkenazi peer. Both see the reality that they expect to see and both realities validate themselves, each in the eyes of the individual beholder. This is Quantum Torah. And it is applicable in almost every branch of religious discussion far beyond the example under discussion here.

Yes, Quantum Torah! This is nothing new, space-age or anything else modern. It is as old as the Torah itself. It is as old as creation itself. It is the way G-d made things to be in the beginning.

This is why Torah Law in almost every instance is subject to variant opinions of interpretation and practice. The great codifiers, first Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi who codified the Mishnah and later Rav Ashi who codified the Gemara, both took extra measures to make sure that their works were not didactic, black and white and monolithic. On the contrary, both authors made the efforts to include the opinions of many others, some in outright contradiction to one another. And still, only together do we have the entirety of the Mishnah or Gemara.

Neither was written to be a definitive final word or code of Law. Only G-d can reveal this. Mankind, on the other hand, looks at G-d's word and sees reflected the profundity, complexity and quantum nature in it, even as it exists correspondingly in the natural world.

Torah legend teaches us that in the beginning G-d gazed into the Torah and from it created the universe. Therefore, the entire universe, everything in existence around us and within us came forth from out of the Torah. Therefore, everything in existence, around us and within us is part of the Torah. Yet, existence as Torah is not found written in any book. The Torah is summed up to

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us in the words in the Scroll, yet its commentary and true meanings can be found in life itself, and in everything in the universe, everything surrounding us and everything within us.

As existence itself is Torah and as existence itself is quantum, therefore, Torah, the source of existence is by definition also quantum. Therefore, every argument and disagreement, has a truth and a reality to it, all from a unique certain point of view, observed by the beholder. Reality is quantum. Torah is quantum. This apparently was the meaning of the Kabbalist Sage, the Arizal, who taught that each and every soul has their own unique and personal commentary (perush) to the Torah.

Nothing is as it seems. Nothing is as concrete and rigid as we may think. Reality is far more fluid and subjective and that we can possibly imagine. Torah is our anchor on reality. And Torah teaches us much about reality far beyond what any one individual is willing or able to see.

In conclusion, during Passover, leaven is nullified in a 60 to 1 ratio in a non-leavened mixture before the holiday begins and does not reactivate. Then again it does reactivate. Both are true, both are real. It all depends on whose perception of reality you choose to follow.

Is this difficult for you? This is only the beginning, the very first step in embracing the Quantum Torah, which I may add is the source from which you and I were also created. G-d, His Torah and His people are all one! Think about it. Better yet, penetrate within and try to experience it! Maybe then, you'll perceive a sense of your quantum self in a quantum universe which came forth from the Quantum Torah of the All Inclusive Ayn Sof (Without End).

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