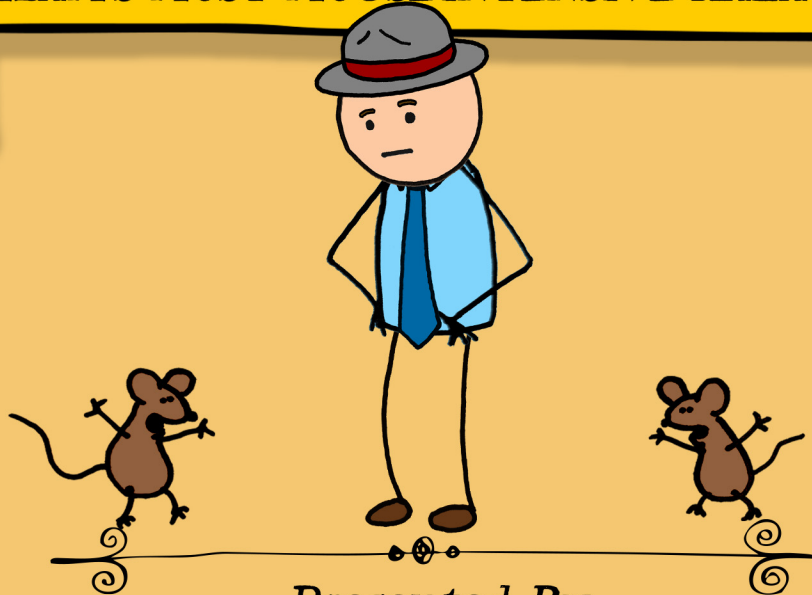


בס"ד

# צלמי עכבר'נים

The  
**Illustrated  
Rodent-Related  
Laws of Passover**

A COMIC ADAPTATION OF  
RAMBAM'S MOST MOUSE-INTENSIVE HALACHOS



*Presented By*

**CreativeJudaism.com**

## **Tzalmei Achbareichem**

*Illustrated Rodent-Related Halachos of Passover*

Written & Illustrated by Dovid Taub

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# Introduction

I've been trying to figure out a Pesach booklet for over a year now. I went through a lot of Haggadah ideas, but I never came up with any that I thought were worth the risk of making the Seder any longer than it already is. My goal is to share joy and happiness—not boredom, G-d forbid.

So I started thinking about something that's brought me joy for many years: a series of halachos in the Rambam's *Mishneh Torah* that deal with an array of mouse-related, pre-Pesach shenanigans. Learning and thinking about these halachos always makes me happy, so I decided to try sharing, on paper, the way I experience them in my head.

All of these scenarios originate in the Talmud, but I've always loved how the Rambam's codification turns them into something that feels almost like a surreal, real-life narrative. This comic is a fairly direct adaptation of how these cases appear in **Hilchos Chametz u'Matzah**, Chapter 2 (halachos 7–13), which I've included in full in the back of the booklet.

Wishing you a **kosher and joyful Pesach**,  
—Dovid Taub



THERE ARE PLACES YOU DON'T HAVE TO BOTHER SEARCHING FOR CHAMETZ BECAUSE PEOPLE DON'T EVER BRING CHAMETZ THERE.



BUT... WHAT IF A WEASEL BROUGHT IT? WEASELS DON'T KNOW THE RULES.



DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!

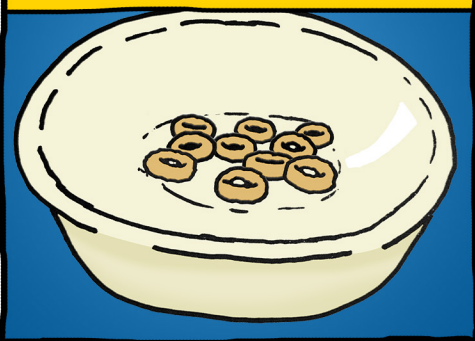
WHY? BECAUSE IT WOULD CAUSE A CHAIN REACTION OF WEASEL POSSIBILITIES THAT WOULD NEVER END



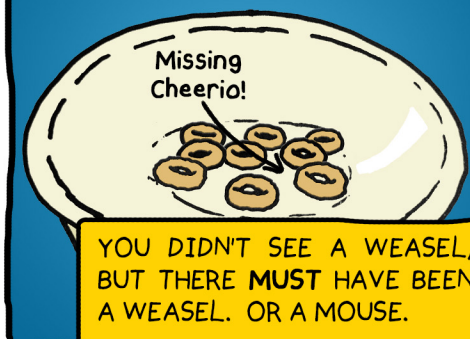
BUT...THAT'S JUST A HYPOTHETICAL WEASEL YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT.

WHAT ABOUT AN IMPLIED WEASEL?

IF YOU PUT ASIDE 10 PIECES OF CHAMETZ AFTER THE SEARCH SO YOU COULD EAT BREAKFAST...

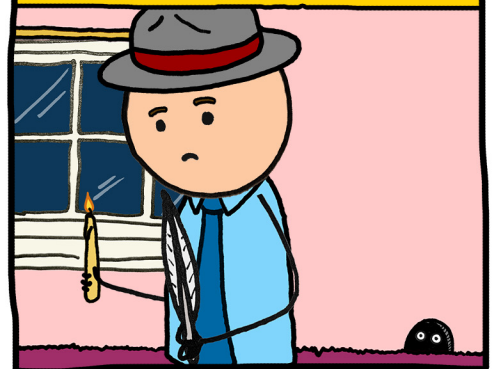


...BUT THE NEXT MORNING, YOU ONLY FIND 9 PIECES...

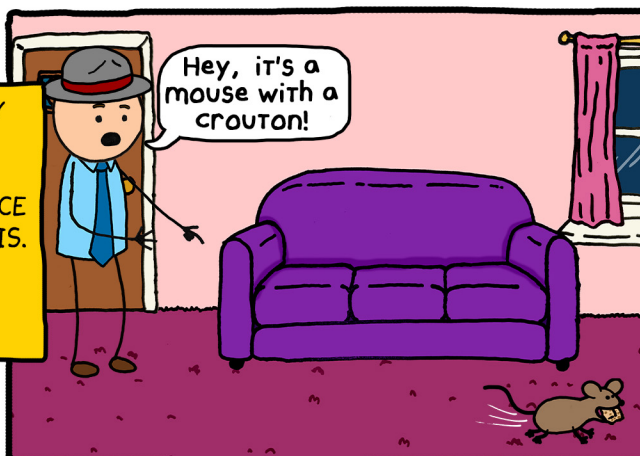


YOU DIDN'T SEE A WEASEL, BUT THERE **MUST** HAVE BEEN A WEASEL. OR A MOUSE.

THAT CHEERIO IS SOMEWHERE, AND NOW YOU HAVE TO FIND IT.



OK, SO, COMPLETELY HYPOTHETICAL CRITTERS AREN'T A PROBLEM BUT EVIDENCE OF UNSEEN CRITTERS IS. BUT WHAT IF YOU ACTUALLY SEE A MOUSE?



Hey, it's a mouse with a crouton!

SORRY, PAL. SEARCH AGAIN!



OK, SO YOU SEARCH AGAIN AND FIND A PILE OF CRUMBS.



MAYBE THAT'S IT. THE MOUSE ATE THE WHOLE THING RIGHT THERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM, AND THIS IS ALL THAT'S LEFT.

I feel so vulnerable and exposed.



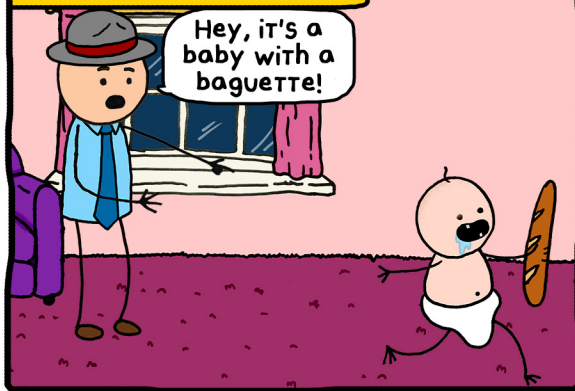
NOPE. MICE DON'T WORK LIKE THAT. IT'S PROBABLY HIDDEN IN A MOUSE HOLE.

There's a crouton in there.

SEARCH AGAIN (AGAIN)!

BUT WHAT IF IT WAS A BABY WITH A BAGUETTE?

Hey, it's a baby with a baguette!



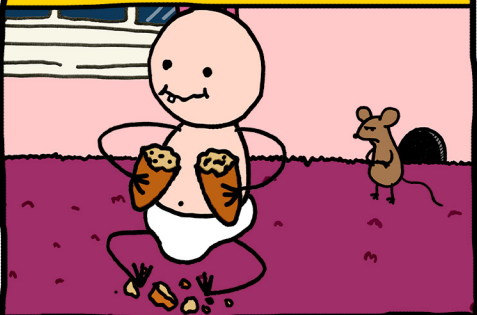
YOU SEARCH AGAIN AND FIND CRUMBS.



DID THE BABY HIDE THE BAGUETTE IN A BABY HOLE?



NOPE! BABIES SIT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM AND MAKE MESSSES. THAT'S HOW BABIES WORK. (BUT NOT MICE).



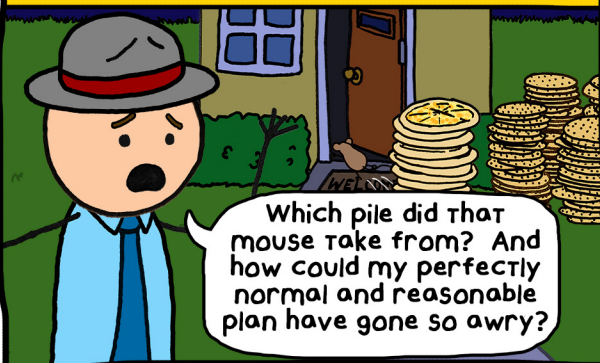
OK, SO FAR THESE SITUATIONS HAVE FELT PRETTY ORGANIC.

LET'S GET MORE ELABORATE AND CONTRIVED.

YOU SET ASIDE NINE PILES OF MATZAH AND ONE PILE OF CHAMETZ. WHY? MAYBE YOU WANT TO HAVE A REALLY NERVE-WRACKING PIZZA PARTY AT 8:00 AM ON EREV PESACH.



A MOUSE TAKES SOMETHING AND RUNS INTO YOUR CHOMETZ-FREE HOUSE.



Which pile did that mouse take from? And how could my perfectly normal and reasonable plan have gone so awry?

SEARCH AGAIN.



BUT... why?!

EXCELLENT QUESTION, CHARACTER WHO SHOULDN'T KNOW THE NARRATOR EXISTS! YOU'RE PROBABLY CONFUSED BECAUSE IT SEEMED LIKE A PERFECT SET-UP TO FOLLOW THE MAJORITY...



Sure. That's exactly what I was thinking.

THERE'S A RULE FROM THE TALMUD THAT IF A PERSON (OR, IN OUR CASE, A MOUSE) ENCOUNTERS AN OBJECT WHILE IT'S STILL IN ITS ORIGINAL PLACE, THE POSSIBILITIES OF WHERE IT COMES FROM ARE CONSIDERED EQUAL.

SO, EVEN THOUGH THE MAJORITY OF THE PILES ARE MATZAH, WE DON'T TAKE THAT INTO ACCOUNT BECAUSE THE MOUSE ENCOUNTERED THIS TASTY MORSEL WHILE IT WAS STILL IN ITS ORIGINAL PILE.

WE'LL LOOK AT THE FLIPSIDE OF THIS SCENARIO LATER ON.

Wait, There are more scenarios?! How many panic-inducing situations are you going to put me through?!

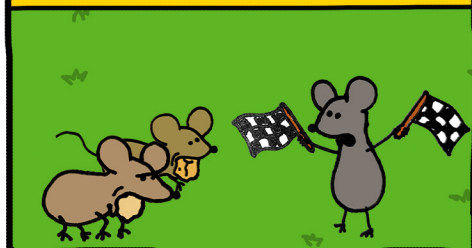
A LOT.

THERE ARE TWO HOUSES. ONE HAS ALREADY BEEN CHECKED FOR CHAMETZ AND ONE HASN'T...

Oh, hi! Looks like you beat me to it this year, neighbor!

Trust me, you don't want any part of this.

THERE ARE TWO MICE. ONE WITH CHAMETZ AND ONE WITH MATZAH. THEY EACH RUN INTO ONE OF THE HOUSES, BUT YOU DON'T KNOW WHICH MOUSE WENT INTO WHICH HOUSE.



DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

So we're just going to assume the mice did the math here and chose the houses they ran into based on what would not cause me to have to search again?

What courteous little rodents!

YEAH, BASICALLY.

OK, WHAT IF BOTH HOUSES WERE ALREADY CHECKED. AND THERE'S JUST ONE MOUSE WITH CHAMETZ?

Pheew. Finally got it done. I hope that mouse doesn't cause any trouble.

It will. Don't you get it? It will.

THE MOUSE RUNS INTO A HOUSE BUT YOU DON'T SEE WHICH ONE...

Oh, looks like we've got a little troublemaker!



DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

So, each home is judged independently and gives plausible deniability to the other? Ain't that a hoot!

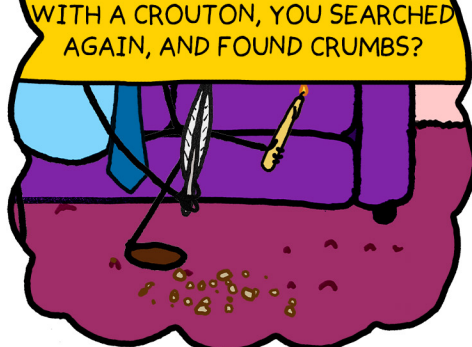
Wait... why are all these scenarios turning out better?! Is it just because Dan is here?

OK, LET'S FOCUS ON JUST ONE HOUSE AGAIN.

I should have kept my mouth shut.



REMEMBER WHEN JUST ONE MOUSE RAN INTO YOUR HOUSE WITH A CROUTON, YOU SEARCHED AGAIN, AND FOUND CRUMBS?



WELL, WHAT IF YOU SEARCHED AGAIN BUT DIDN'T FIND ANYTHING?

can we please just say that I did my best and let me give up?

Nothing!

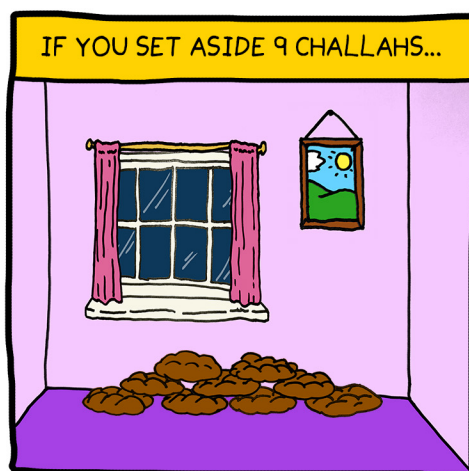
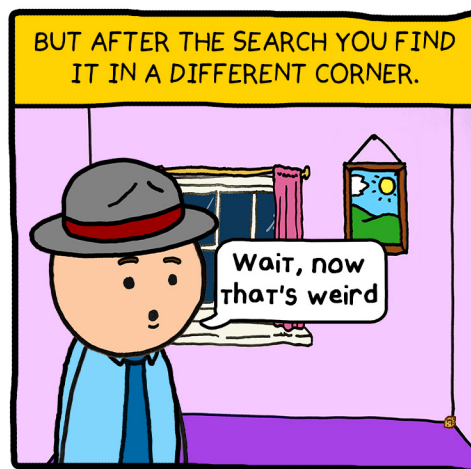
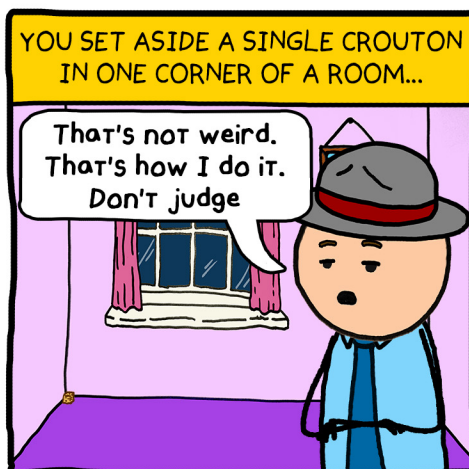
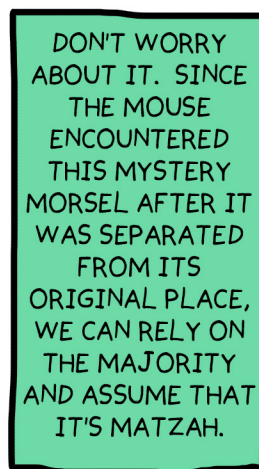
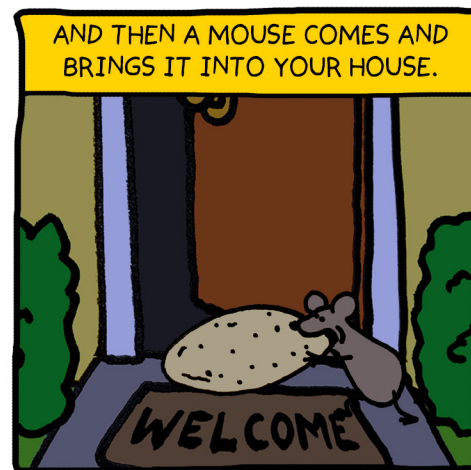
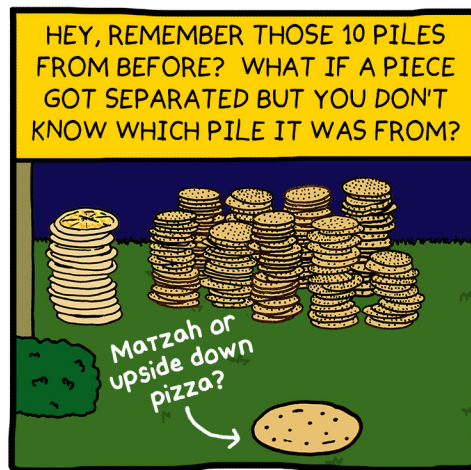
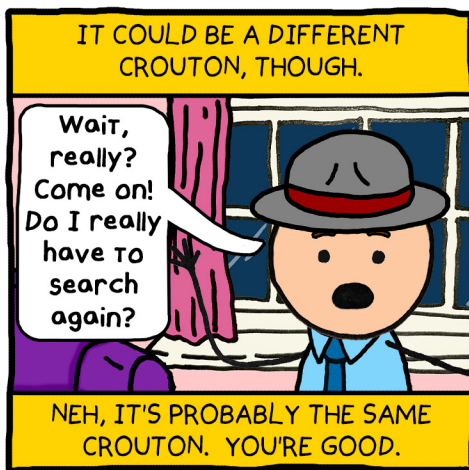
ACTUALLY, YES. YOU'RE GOOD.

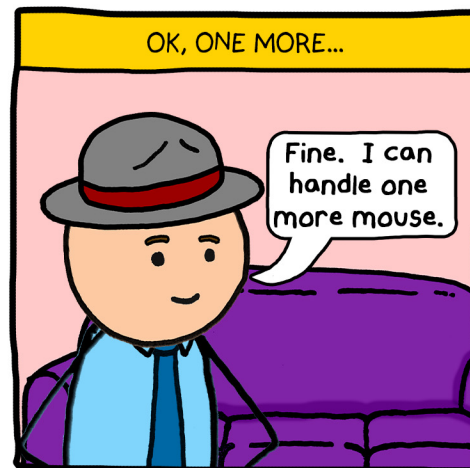
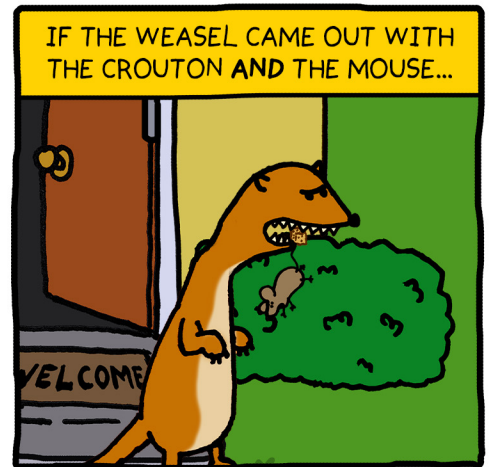
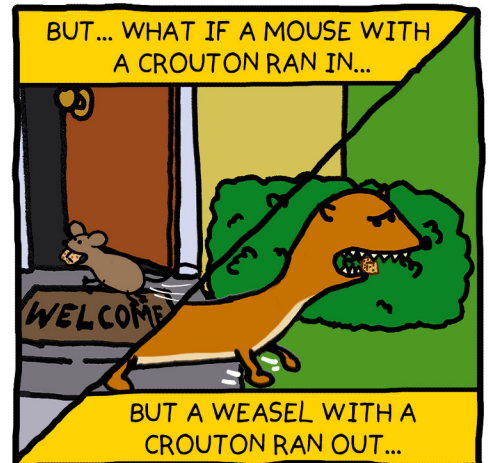
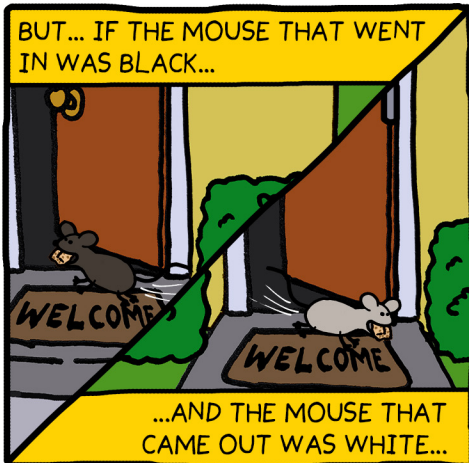
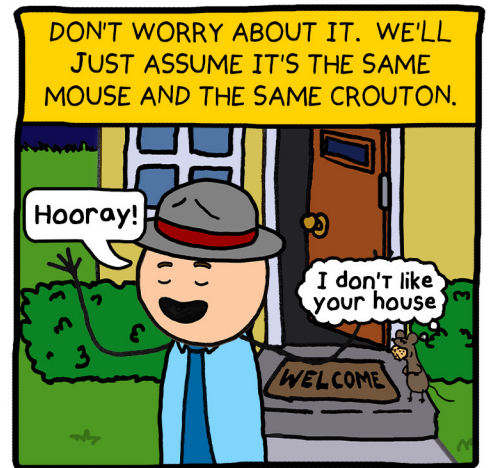
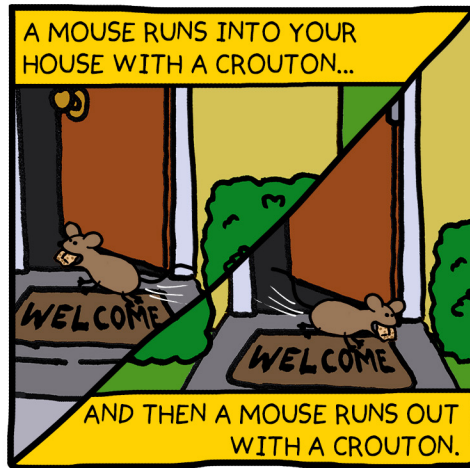
BUT... WHAT IF YOU SEARCHED AGAIN AND FOUND A CROUTON?

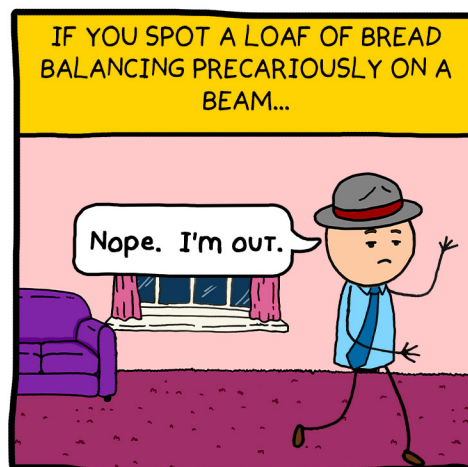
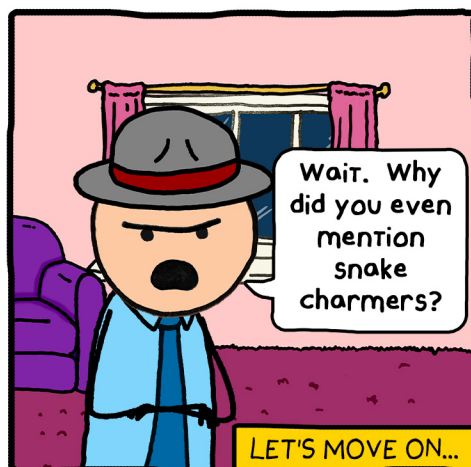
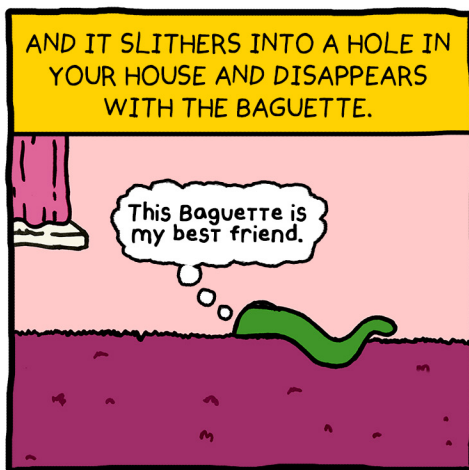
That's bad. Wait, no, that's good, right? It means I found it, right?

CROUTON!









## THE END

**"...כי אחרי אשר בדק איש גופו ואיבריו עד היה הבית בדוק היא גופו. ראה והנה עכבר נכנס וככר בפיו הוא רשע טמא כעכבר ולשון הרע בפיו אז נטמא כלו וצריך בדיקה את כל הבית..."**

**"...A PERSON SPIRITUALLY EXAMINES EVERY ASPECT OF THEMSELVES TO THE POINT THAT THE "HOUSE" - THEIR ENTIRE SELF - IS CONSIDERED SEARCHED. THEN, SUDDENLY, A MOUSE ENTERS WITH A LOAF IN ITS MOUTH - THIS IS A BAD PERSON, WHO IS IMPURE LIKE A MOUSE, WITH LASHON HARA IN THEIR MOUTH. THEN EVERYTHING IS CONTAMINATED, AND THE ENTIRE "HOUSE" MUST BE SEARCHED AGAIN...."**

-ALSHICH ON TORAH, EXODUS 12:13

# Mouse Halachos

Source Sheet by Dovid Taub

## Mishneh Torah, Leavened and Unleavened Bread 2:7

We do not suspect that a weasel dragged chametz into a place where it is not usually brought. Were we to suspect [that chametz would be taken] from house to house, we would also have to suspect [that chametz might be taken] from city to city. There is no end to the matter.

A person who checked on the night of the fourteenth and placed ten loaves of chametz [on the side] and [later] found [only] nine must suspect [that chametz is present in his home,] and [hence], must search a second time, for definitely it was taken by a weasel or mouse.

## Mishneh Torah, Leavened and Unleavened Bread 2:8

Similarly, a person who saw a mouse enter the house with chametz in its mouth after he searched [for chametz] must search a second time. [This applies] even if he found crumbs in the middle of the house; we do not necessarily presume that it already ate the bread in this place and that these are its crumbs. Rather, we suspect that it left the bread in a hole or window, and that these crumbs were [originally] located there. Hence, he must search again.

If he does not find anything, he must search through the entire house. If he found the bread that the mouse took when he entered, he need not search [further].

## Mishneh Torah, Leavened and Unleavened Bread 2:9

[A person who] saw an infant enter an already checked house with bread in his hand, followed him inside and discovered crumbs, need not search [again]. We may confidently assume that he ate the bread and that these crumbs fell from him while eating. Infants generally crumble food while eating, though mice do not.

If he does not find any crumbs, he must check [again].

## Mishneh Torah, Leavened and Unleavened Bread 2:10

Nine piles of matzah and one of chametz were placed [aside]. A mouse came and took [something from one of the piles] and entered a house that had been checked. If we do not know whether it took either chametz or matzah, the house must be checked [again], for every instance where [a doubt arises and the presence of both the permitted and forbidden substances] is fixed, [is judged] as if they were present in equal amounts.

## משנה תורה, הלכות חמץ ומצה ב'ז'

אין חוששין שמא גררה חלדה חמץ למקום שאין מכניסין בו חמץ שאם נחוש מבית לבית נחוש מעיר לעיר ואין לדבר סוף. בדק ליל ארבעה עשר והניח עשר חלות ומצא תשע הרי זה חושש וצריך לבדק פעם שניה שהרי גררה חלדה או עכבר בודאי:

## משנה תורה, הלכות חמץ ומצה ב'ח'

וכן אם ראה עכבר שנכנס לבית וחמץ בפיו אחר בדיקה צריך לבדק פעם שניה אף על פי שמצא פרווין באמצע הבית אין אומרים כבר אכל אותה הפת במקום זה והרי הפרוורין אלא חוששין שמא הניחה בחור או בחלון ואלו הפרוורין שם היו. ולפיכך חוזר ובודק. אם לא מצא כלום הרי זה בודק כל הבית ואם מצא אותה הפת שנטלה העכבר ונכנס אין צריך בדיקה:

## משנה תורה, הלכות חמץ ומצה ב'ט'

ראה תינוק שנכנס לבית בדוק ובידו כפר ונכנס אחריו ומצא פרוורין אינו צריך בדיקה שחזקתו שאכלו ואלו הפרוורין שנפלו ממנו בשעת אכילה שדרך התינוק לפרר בעת אכילתו ואין דרך עכבר לפרר. ואם לא מצא פרוורין כלל צריך לבדק:

## משנה תורה, הלכות חמץ ומצה ב'י'

הניח תשעה צבורין של מצה ואחד של חמץ ובא עכבר ונטל ולא ידענו אם חמץ או מצה נטל ונכנס לבית בדוק צריך לבדק שכל הקבוע פמחצה על מחצה:

### Mishneh Torah, Leavened and Unleavened Bread 2:11

There were two piles: one of chametz and one of matzah, and two houses: one that had been searched and one that had not been searched. Two mice came; one took chametz and one took matzah [and they entered the houses] without our knowing which house the mouse holding the chametz entered...

Similarly, there were two houses which had been checked, with one pile of chametz before them. A mouse took [from the pile and entered a house]. However, we do not know which house he entered...

or we saw which one he entered, a person followed him, checked [for chametz], and did not find anything...  
or he checked and found bread...

Similarly, when there were nine piles of matzah and one of chametz, and a loaf became separated from the piles, and we do not know whether it was chametz or matzah: If a mouse took the loaf that became separated and entered the house that had been checked:

In all of these cases, there is no need to check a second time, because the presence of the forbidden substance is not fixed.

### Mishneh Torah, Leavened and Unleavened Bread 2:12

A person who placed chametz in one corner and discovered it in another...

or who put aside nine loaves and found ten...

or a mouse came and took the chametz, and there is a doubt whether he entered this house or not...

In all these cases, he must search [the house again].

### Mishneh Torah, Leavened and Unleavened Bread 2:13

A mouse entered a house with a loaf in its mouth.

Afterwards, a mouse left there with a loaf in its mouth; we presume that the same mouse who entered originally was the one which ultimately left, and [the owner] need not search [again]. If the first mouse which entered was black and the one which left was white, he must search [again].

If a mouse entered with a loaf in its mouth and a weasel left there with a loaf in its mouth, he must search [again]. If a weasel left there with a mouse and a loaf in its mouth, he does not have to search [again]. [We may presume] that this is the loaf which was in the mouse's mouth.

If a snake enters a hole with a loaf in its mouth, there is no obligation to bring a snakecharmer to remove it.

### משנה תורה, הלכות חמץ ומצה ב'י"א

שְׁנֵי צְבוּרִין אֶחָד שֶׁל חֻמֶּץ וְאֶחָד שֶׁל מַצָּה וּשְׁנֵי בָתִּים אֶחָד בְּדוּק וְאֶחָד שְׂאִינוּ בְּדוּק וּבָאוּ שְׁנֵי עֶכְבְּרִים זֶה נָטַל חֻמֶּץ וְזֶה נָטַל מַצָּה וְאִין יָדוּעַ לָאִי זֶה בֵּית נִכְנָס זֶה שֶׁנָּטַל הַחֻמֶּץ. וְכֵן שְׁנֵי בָתִּים בְּדוּקִין וּצְבוּר אֶחָד שֶׁל חֻמֶּץ וּבָא עֶכְבֵּר וְנָטַל וְאִין יָדוּעַ לָאִיזָה בֵּית נִכְנָס. אוֹ שֶׁיָּדַע שֶׁנִּכְנָס לְאֶחָד מֵהֶן וְנִכְנָס אֲחֵרֵיוּ וּבִדָּק וְלֹא מָצָא כְּלוּם אוֹ שֶׁבִּדָּק וּמָצָא כֶּכֶר. אוֹ שֶׁהָיָה תִּשְׁעָה צְבוּרִין שֶׁל מַצָּה וְאֶחָד שֶׁל חֻמֶּץ וּפִרְשׁ כֶּכֶר מֵהֶן וְאִין יָדוּעַ אִם חֻמֶּץ אִם מַצָּה וּבָא עֶכְבֵּר וְנָטַל הַכֶּכֶר שֶׁפִּרְשׁ וְנִכְנָס לְבֵית בְּדוּק בְּכָל אֵלּוּ אֵינּוּ צָרִיד לְבִדָּק פַּעַם שְׁנִיָּה שְׂאִין כָּאִין קְבוּעַ:

### משנה תורה, הלכות חמץ ומצה ב'י"ב

הָנִיחַ הַחֻמֶּץ בְּזוּיָה זֶה וּמָצָאוּ בְּזוּיָה אַחֵר אוֹ שֶׁהָנִיחַ תִּשְׁעַ חֲלוֹת וּמָצָא עֶשְׂרִי. אוֹ שֶׁבָּא עֶכְבֵּר וְנָטַל הַחֻמֶּץ וְסִפֵּק נִכְנָס לְבֵית זֶה אוֹ לֹא נִכְנָס. בְּכָל אֵלּוּ צָרִיד לְבִדָּק:

### משנה תורה, הלכות חמץ ומצה ב'י"ג

נִכְנָס עֶכְבֵּר לְבֵית וְכֶכֶר בְּפִיו וְיָצָא עֶכְבֵּר מִשָּׁם וְכֶכֶר בְּפִיו אוֹמְרִים הוּא הָרֵאשׁוֹן שֶׁנִּכְנָס הוּא הָאַחֲרוֹן שֶׁיָּצָא וְאֵינּוּ צָרִיד לְבִדָּק. הִיָּה הָרֵאשׁוֹן שֶׁנִּכְנָס שָׁחוּר וְזֶה שֶׁיָּצָא לְבֵן צָרִיד לְבִדָּק. נִכְנָס עֶכְבֵּר וְכֶכֶר בְּפִיו וְיָצְאָתָה מִשָּׁם חֲלָדָה וְכֶכֶר בְּפִיהָ צָרִיד לְבִדָּק. יָצְאָתָה מִשָּׁם חֲלָדָה וְעֶכְבֵּר וְכֶכֶר בְּפִיהָ אֵינּוּ צָרִיד לְבִדָּק שֶׁזֶה הַכֶּכֶר הוּא שֶׁהָיָה בְּפִי הָעֶכְבֵּר. נִחַשׁ שֶׁנִּכְנָס לְחֹר וּפֶת בְּפִיו אִין חֵיב לְהֵבִיא חֶבֶר לְהוֹצִיאָו:



*"Tzalmei Achbareichem"* is an illustrated exploration of Rambam's lesser-known but **extremely rodent-forward** halachos of bedikas chametz.

With reverence for the Rambam's precision and a healthy respect for cartoon mammals, *Tzalmei Achbareichem* seeks to illuminate the delicate interplay between doubt and certainty, matzah and chametz, mouse and man.

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