

## **Why is this Pesach different than Pesach every year?**

This year has the distinction that Erev Pesach, the day before Pesach - the 14th of Nissan, is Shabbat. Thus, many of the usual activities that are usually performed on this day cannot be performed.

### **Siyum Bechor**

Every year Erev Pesach there is a fast for the first born. It is customary that the Bechor (the first born) attend a siyum (conclusion celebration) on the morning of Erev Pesach. Clearly there cannot be a fast on Shabbat, so the fast is moved back to Thursday. There will be two minyanim on Thursday, each having a siyum, so a first born does not have to fast.

### **Bedikas Chometz – searching for the Chometz**

Every year, on the eve of the day before Pesach - the 14th of Nissan, we take a candle/flashlight and search our homes for Chometz. Clearly that is not something we can do on a Friday night. Thus, we put out ten pieces of bread and search for the Chometz on Thursday night. One should annul their Chometz after their search is completed.

### **Biur Chometz – Burning the Chometz**

Every year we burn the Chometz during the morning of Erev Pesach - the 14th of Nissan. This year Erev Pesach is Shabbat and thus we cannot burn Chometz. Therefore, the burning of the Chometz is on Friday morning. It should be done before 11:45am. There will not be a communal burning this year. One can burn Chometz on their Chometz grill.

### **Owning and eating Chometz after the Burning**

Every year after we burn our Chometz we are not permitted to own Chometz and certainly not permitted to eat it. However, this year it is permitted. The reason it is permitted this year, is that the prohibition of owning and eating Chometz begins on the actual Erev Pesach - the 14th day of Nissan - which is actually Shabbat. So why do we burn the Chometz a day earlier? The answer is to keep a consistency of burning Chometz the morning after the search for the Chometz.

### **Friday night and Shabbat Day Erev Pesach**

Every year the Shabbat before Pesach is referred to as Shabbat Hagadol. It is a time for people to eat their Chometz and come to shul to hear a Shabbat Hagadol Drasha. However, this year the tone of the Shabbat before Pesach drastically changes. Most people have gotten rid of their Chometz and have their homes ready for Pesach.

The only contact one must have with Chometz on Shabbat Hagadol, is eating bread (Lechem Mishna) two breads, to honor the Shabbat, as we do every week.

One might ask, to avoid contact with Chometz can we use Matzah? The answer to that

question is that it is prohibited to eat Matzah Erev Pesach. Thus, to minimize the interaction with Chometz, most people will make Kiddush and eat a Challah roll outside and then come in to a perfectly Pesach home to finish their meal. This would be done at night and then again in the morning. Being that the latest time to eat Chometz is 10:28am Shabbat morning, Shul will daven earlier than usual. After eating the roll outside, the family can take their time in eating the rest of their meal with Pesach food. One should, however, go back to their porch where they ate the bread to recite the Birkat Hamazon.

White Plains residents have an advantage with regard to Chometz removal. They can dispose of their Chometz in the City garbage pails, since those trash cans are owned by the City of White Plains. Therefore, when one places the Chometz in those containers and relinquishes ownership of the Chometz via their annulment, then the Chometz is no longer in their ownership, and they are fine.

Please keep in mind that one can eat as much Chometz as they like until 10:28am. The above scenario of eating one Challah roll per meal is a suggestion to keep things simple.

### **Biur Chometz and Bitul Chometz**

Every year the final Bitul Chometz (annulment of the Chometz) and declaring it ownerless, is declared at the time of Biur Chometz (burning of the Chometz) when one burns their Chometz and rids themselves of it. This year we do not burn the Chometz on the Shabbat but one should save a little bit of Chometz and actively destroy it e.g. by flushing it down the toilet. At that time, the person should recite in English the Bitul – annulment of the Chometz. This should take place before 11:44am.

### **Seudah Shlishit**

Every Shabbat of the year we wash before eating bread and eat a third meal in the afternoon. This year we cannot do that for we cannot eat Challah nor Matzah. Thus, a person should eat general foods e.g. fish, and have that in mind for Suedah Shlishit.

### **Kashering**

Every Pesach we have a large commercial pot in the Shul kitchen with special equipment, to help people kasher their utensils. Unfortunately, this year we will not be able to do so. In short, the laws of kashering our kitchen go as follows:

**Self clean ovens** - clean around the door and by the gaskets and then let the oven run a cycle. This works for the racks as well. Anything put in the oven at the time of the cycle becomes “koshered” as well e.g. grates of a stove top, grill grates.

**Conventional non-self clean ovens** - should be thoroughly cleaned with Easy Off and not used for twenty four hours. It should be turned on to the highest temperature for one hour. This works for the racks as well.

**Grates of Stove Top** - can be placed in a self clean oven if they do not have rubber on the bottom of the grates. Another solution is to turn the grates upside down in the stove top fire for ten minutes.

**Microwave Oven** - Interior should be cleaned out well and then should not be used for 24 hours before koshering. Place a cup of water in the microwave and let the water boil. The vapor of the water will Kasher the microwave. The water should then be placed on a different part of the surface of the microwave and the process repeated. The turntable should be removed and replaced with ¼ inch styrofoam board.

**Kitchen Sink Stainless Steel** - Pour boiling water on the surface of the sink and the faucet. Do not use the sink with hot water for 24 hours prior to koshering. The best solution is to close the hot water.

**Ceramic Sinks** - should be covered with aluminum foil or a sink insert.

**Pots** – Pots can be placed in even larger pots that contain boiling water. However, this is difficult to do in the home. Furthermore, a pot must be spotless in order to Kasher. This is almost impossible if a pot has a lip. It is suggested to get Kosher for Pesach pots.

**Silverware** - and other small items - if they are spotlessly clean are easily Kashered. The silverware or other utensil can be placed in a pot of boiling water. The items being Kashered should not be used for 24hrs before this process. It is customary to use a Kosher for Pesach pot, however, a Chometz pot can be used as long as that pot has not been used for 24 hours and then water was boiled in that pot and discarded. One must be careful that the water in the pot is boiling when each piece of silverware is placed in the pot. Therefore, after each piece is placed in the boiling pot one must see that the water reboiled before putting the next item in the pot.

**Counter tops** - can be koshered when boiling hot water is poured on them or simply covered.

## **Matzah**

### **Shiur – Amount to Eat**

Aside from eating Shmura Matzah at the Seder, one must eat a required amount of Kzait – size of an olive. There is much discussion of how this “Shiur” amount should be derived. The best way to accommodate the various opinions is to eat about 2/3 of a sheet of machine Matzah and 1/3 to 1/2 of a hand Matzah.

### **Shiur Zman- Time Parameters**

There is likewise a timeframe within which Matzah should be eaten. That is after the Bracha is recited on eating the Matzah, one is required to eat the Matzah quickly and continuously

without interruption. A person would fulfill their obligation of eating Matzah if they ate the above amount within four or five minutes. However, if they took a nibble here and there they would not fulfill their obligation.

### **Questions**

Obviously, the above is meant to be a short summary of the Halachot of Pesach and did not touch upon every situation that might come up. If someone has a question please email me at [rebbeshmuel@aol.com](mailto:rebbeshmuel@aol.com). There are many resources online. Among the more popular ones are the websites of the OU, Star K Baltimore and CRC Chicago.

Chag Kosher V'Somayach – A Joyous and Healthy Chag,  
Rabbi Alter Shmuel Greenberg