

PESACH 5781: A GUIDE TO CELEBRATING & ENHANCING THE HOLY DAY

For many, *Pesach* preparations begin several weeks in advance of the first *Seder*. Our houses need to be thoroughly cleaned, guests are invited to our *Seders*, menus and recipes are contemplated and shopping must be completed; all before sundown on the first night of *Pesach*. This is a guide to the preparations and events leading up to the night of the first *Seder*. Much of the preparation spoken about in this guide pertains to the food concerns surrounding the observance of the *Pesach* holiday. After reading through this material, if you still have questions, please feel free to contact Rabbi Carnie Shalom Rose, Cantor Sharon Nathanson, Rabbi Jeffrey Abraham, or Rabbi Neal Rose to help address your individual concerns.

CLEANING

The home atmosphere during *Pesach* is created each year by the traditional practice of thoroughly cleansing all parts of our homes and by the removal of *Chametz* (leaven) in preparation for the welcoming of *Pesach*. This is in addition to meticulously avoiding the use of *Chametz* throughout the days of *Pesach*; both at home and away. The term *Chametz* is applied not only to foods, but also to the dishes and utensils with which the foods are prepared or served during the year.

“Any manner of *Chametz* (leavened food or utensils) owned by a Jew during the *Pesach* holiday is forbidden to use forever.” Since current conditions make it impossible to literally fulfill the Biblical command to destroy all leavened products, our Sages instituted a practice called *Mechirat Chametz*, the selling of *Chametz*. All Jews are reminded of the necessity to divest themselves of ownership of *Chametz* and make their home ritually ready. Please see form included in this packet or on our website at www.bnaiamoona.com.

A special note from our Klei Kodesh on a Passover that begins on a Saturday night:

When Passover starts on a Saturday night, “*Erev Pesach*” is stretched over three days.

- The Fast/Feast of the Firstborn, which would normally be on Passover eve, is pushed two days earlier, so that we do not have to fast on Shabbat or Friday. So, the traditional *Siyum* for the First Born will be held on Thursday morning.
- Then, Thursday night is when we search for *Chametz* by candlelight.
- Kitchens should be completely switched over to Kosher for *Pesach* and we get rid of almost all our *Chametz* by burning or selling it by the sixth hour of the day on Friday.

But what about *Challah* on Shabbat? For Shabbat meals, there are two solutions:

1. Eat *Chametz*, but very carefully. The *Chametz* sale document, and the way that we dispose of *Chametz*, has a loophole for any *Chametz* that we are planning to eat on the rest of Friday evening or Shabbat morning. We can therefore hold back enough *Challah* for Shabbat dinner and Shabbat lunch (this is a great time for paper plates or outdoor dining). We finish eating the *Chametz* by the fifth hour, and dispose of any leftovers by the sixth. Leftovers can be discarded--rendered inedible. At that time, we recite the “*Kol Chamira*” formula (normally recited when burning the *Chametz*) that cancels any remaining *Chametz*.

2. “Egg *Matzah*” is not technically considered *Matzah*, but is also not *Chametz*, as it is similar to bread. So, it’s possible to use two sheets of it in the place of *Challah*, and thus be totally Kosher-for-Passover.

מְכִירַת חָמֵץ
MECHIRAT CHAMETZ
(Selling of *Chametz*)

Final date of Sale: Friday, March 26 following *Minyan* and no later than 10:00 am
Please see separate form included in this packet or on our website.

מְעוֹת חֲטָיִים
MAOT CHITTIM

(“Coins for Wheat” - Funds for those in need)

Please see separate form included in this packet or on our website.

בְּדִיקַת חָמֵץ
BEDIKAT CHAMETZ
(Searching for, and removal of, *Chametz*)
Thursday night, March 25, after dark

The ceremonial cleansing of the home should be meticulously carried out along with the ancient and colorful ceremony of searching for, and removing, leaven on the night before *Pesach*. By candlelight, parents and children go from room to room “searching” for leaven. With a large feather and wooden spoon or bowl, the crumbs of bread (previously placed where they may be easily found) are collected. Both the crumbs and receptacle are wrapped together and burned before 10:00 am the following morning.

When searching for the *Chametz* the *B'rachah* recited is as follows:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלִכֵּי הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל בְּעוֹר חָמֵץ.

“*Baruch Atah Adonai Ehlohaynoo Melech Haolom Asher Kidshanoo B'mitzvotav V'tzeevanoo Al Bee-ur Chametz.*”

“Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments and enjoined upon us the *Mitzvah* of removing leaven before *Pesach*.”

After the search is completed and the leaven and receptacle are wrapped together, say:

כָּל חֲמִירָא וְחֲמִיעָה דְּאַכָּא בְּרִשׁוּתֵי דְּלָא חֲמַתָּהּ וְדְּלָא בְּעֲרַתָּהּ וְדְּלָא יִדְעָנָא לָהּ לְבִטְלָא
וְלִהוּי הַפְּקָר כְּעַפְרָא דְּאַרְעָא.

“*Kol Chameerah V'chameeya D'eekah Beershootee D'lah Chameetay Oodlah Beeartay Oodlah Y'dahnah Lay Leebahtail V'leh-heh-vay Hef-care K'ah-frah D'arah.*”

“May all leaven in my possession, which I have not seen or removed be regarded as non-existent and considered as mere dust of the earth.”

סִיּוּם בְּכוֹרִים
SIYUM B'CHORIM (Fast of the Firstborn)
Thursday, March 25, 7:00 am
Morning *Minyan* followed by *Siyum*

On the day before *Pesach*, the firstborn of our people fast to commemorate their being spared the fate of the firstborn Egyptians. One may eat, however, if he/she is participating in a *Seudah Mitzvah*, the festival meal which accompanies the performance of certain *Mitzvot*. One such *Mitzvah* is *Talmud Torah* study. Thus, when a scholar completes a significant section of material (e.g. a tractate of *Talmud*), it is customary for all present to join in a *Siyum*, a ceremony of completion with a festive meal. Any firstborn who participates in the ceremony may then eat. This is known as the *Siyum B'Chorim*. Everyone, firstborn or not, is invited to participate in this meaningful experience.

בעור חמץ
BIUR CHAMETZ (Burning of Chametz)
Friday, March 26, before 10:00 am

The following is said when the leaven is burned in the morning before 10:00 am.

כָּל חֲמִירָא וְחֲמִיעָה דְאִכָּא בְרִשׁוּתֵי דְחֻזְתָּהּ וְדָלָא חֻזְתָּהּ, דְחֲמִתָּהּ וְדָלָא חֲמִתָּהּ, דְבִעְרָתָהּ
וְדָלָא בְעֵרָתָהּ, לְבָטֵל וְלֵהוּי הַפְּקָר כְּעַפְרָא דְאַרְעָא.

*“Kol Chameerah V’chameeya D’eekeh Beershootee D’chazeetay Oodlah Chazeetay D’chameetay Oodlah Chameetay
D’veartay Oodlah Vee’areetay Leebahtail V’leh-heh-vay Hef-care K’ah-frah D’arah.”*

“May all leaven in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, or whether I have removed it or not, be regarded as non-existent and considered as mere dust of the earth.”

For additional details regarding food restrictions on *Pesach*, please review the Rabbinical Assembly’s
Pesach Guide posted on our website at www.bnaiamoona.com, or contact Rabbi Carnie Rose at
314-576-9990 x105 or RavRoseBA@bnaiamoona.com.