

Dear Friends,

I hope that you are all fairing well and managing amidst these trying and uncertain times. As Pesach continues to draw closer, I would like to reiterate my remarks from last week's email - Please continue to practice social distancing, even over the course of Pesach. This means that Passover meals should be celebrated with and only with those that live in your home. We should not be having guests nor should we be visiting with others. This is especially important for those who are immunocompromised and/or above the age of 60. It behooves us all to practice these limitations in order to avoid a potentially disastrous outcome for us and our community.

As I mentioned last week, I know that this is challenging for many and very different from our usual celebration of the Festival of Freedom. In order to mitigate the situation, consider having a video call before the Seder during which family members and friends can connect, share memories of previous seders and even sing together or ask family members and friends to send each other stories or questions to be read during the Seder.

As you continue to plan for Pesach, please pay extra attention to the information below that will be very helpful in the coming days.

This email includes the following topics:

Helping Others; Asking for Help
Mechirat Chametz - Sale of Chametz
Pesach Food Options
Kashering for Pesach
Tevilat Keilim - Keilim Mikvah
Taanit Bechorim - Fast of the Firstborn
Bi'ur Chametz - Destruction of Chametz
Pesach Classes - Special Class with Rabbi & Ora Wednesday Night!
Additional Pesach Resources

I know there is a lot here, but some practices will be conducted differently this year given the parameters and the general challenges of dealing with COVID-19, so please review all relevant topics below.

It is a Mitzvah to Help Others;
It is a Mitzvah to Ask for Help

This year, unprecedented numbers of people will be struggling financially - not just to be able to afford Pesach essentials, but struggling with loss of income and employment. It is our responsibility to look after each other in this time of financial distress and anxiety. Of course, this year we are collecting funds for Maot Chittim (Passover Charity) - [You can donate through the Shul website](#), please make sure to note that your donation is for this purpose.

We have a dedicated group of volunteers who have expressed interest in assisting those who need help with grocery pickup and other errands. If you are in need of assistance or would like to volunteer, please be in touch with Ora at oradavies@gmail.com.

Mechirat Chametz - Sale of Chametz

Be sure to sign [this form](#) and get it back to me by the latest Erev Pesach, Wednesday, April 8th at 9:00am. Due to social distancing, and based on the Psak of Rabbi Herschel Schachter, we will not be doing Kinyan Sudar (lifting the pen/cellphone) this year. The easiest way to get the form to me is to print it, fill it out, take a picture of it, and send it back to me.

Many people have the custom of not selling "Chametz Gamur" - actual Chametz, such as bread, crackers, pasta etc. That is usually my own practice too. However, this year, I strongly urge you not to follow this practice. Any non-perishable food can be well wrapped and stored in a closet or freezer and sold with the rest of the Chametz.

Those who cannot get to their offices or to the Shul can still [sell their chametz](#) that is in their office or cubby, together with all the other chametz that they are selling.

Pesach Food Options

I'm sure many of you have ordered food from Dining In and we so appreciate the extended deadline that allowed for more people to make plans when their original plans fell through.

If, for whatever reason, you were not able to order through Dining In and are still in need of food for Passover Seder, please [contact me](#) ASAP so that we can arrange something for you.

Those who have ordered Shmurah Matzah through the Shul/Chabad will be hearing about pick-up/delivery options shortly. For those who are still looking for Shmurah Matzah for your Seder, please [contact me](#) so that we can arrange for you to have what you need.

Kashering For Pesach

The OU has a brief but thorough description of how to prepare a Kitchen for Pesach, which [you can read here](#). You can also take a look at the [wonderful video series](#) put together by my friend Rabbi Yaakov Trump of the Young Israel of Lawrence Cedarhurst.

Needless to say I will be available to answer any questions, and if some of these procedures seem daunting or you fear you will not be able to manage them by yourself, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Keilim Mikvah

If/when purchasing new utensils for Pesach, one should make sure to immerse them in the mikvah. The Keilim Mikvah for the immersion of newly purchased utensils at BSBI remains open at this time. When using the Mikvah, please adhere to the following protocols:

1. Prepare utensils (remove stickers, packaging, etc.) prior to going to the mikvah.
2. Practice social distancing - if someone is already using the Mikvah, please wait in your car until they have finished and left the area before going over to the Mikvah.
3. You should wear latex gloves when immersing vessels.
4. You should wash your hands both before and after using the mikveh.

One must make certain, when immersing vessels, that the entire vessel is immersed at the same time without any chatzitzah (separation between the water and the utensil).

If someone is not able to make it down to the BSBI Keilim Mikvah, one may immerse utensils in a natural body of water that meets the requirements of a kosher mikvah. Please ask me if you are not sure.

Taanit Bechorim - Fast of the First Born

Erev Pesach is known as Ta'anit Bechorot - the fast of the first born. Men who are first born are required to fast. However, it is the common custom to attend a siyum in the morning, which releases the obligation to fast. This year, we will have an online Siyum. It will take place at 8:30 am and further details will be sent out next week.

If you are able, it is preferable for all those who join a siyum each year to make their own siyum. This is not as hard as it may sound! Masechet Tamid has only 9 pages and is available in English for free [HERE \(Artscroll\)](#) or [HERE \(Sefaria\)](#).

Bi'ur Chametz - Destruction of Chametz (literally burning, but not this year)

Rav Herschel Schachter is of the opinion that the best way to perform bi'ur chametz this year is:

1. Limit the amount of leftover chametz we have in our possession on the morning of Erev Pesach.
2. A small amount of chametz (no more than a k'zayis (an olive-sized amount) is needed) should be crushed into tiny particles, so as to not clog the plumbing, and flushed (without any bags or wrapping) in the toilet.
3. Disposal of other chametz - Other chametz should be disposed of in the trash and left in cans at the curb. Since we will not be having a communal pickup this year and the trash cans are still in your property, bittul (nullification) and hefker (making it ownerless) is insufficient. One should pour bleach (or some other substance) on the chametz to render it nifsal mei-achilat kelev (no longer edible).

Pesach Classes

Ora and I will be giving a special pre-Pesach class through Zoom entitled "Questions for Passover I Never Thought I Would Have to Ask"

Please keep your eye out for emails announcing other Pre-Pesach information.

Join the Wednesday evening class [here](#), meeting ID 864 874 319 #

Additional Pesach Resources

[Click here to download the 2020 OU Passover Guide](#)

[Click here to download the 2020 KosherQuest Pesach Magazine](#)

[Click here to download the 2020 Yeshiva University's Torah To-Go Pesach Edition](#)

If you would like hard copies of any of these publications, we would be happy to deliver them to you.

Please stay home and stay healthy. May Hashem watch over all our precious healthcare workers and volunteers, grant a full and speedy recovery to all those who are ill, and protect all of us from harm.

I look forward to being in touch again soon with more updates.

Thinking of you and wishing you all the best,

Rabbi Davies

rabbi@dortikvah.org

843-868-1858