



LAWS & CUSTOMS FOR NISSAN & PESACH

For the year 5781

Comments or questions, please email Rabbi Wolf rabbewolf@bdhls.org

Thanks to Rabbi Shmuel Lesches (Melbourne Australia) for assistance in preparing this guide

► THIRTY DAYS PRIOR TO PESACH

From Purim onward, one should learn and become fluent in the Laws of Pesach.

Some **refrain from eating Matzah** during this time. Others stop after Rosh Chodesh Nissan. However, until the end-time for eating *Chametz* on Erev Pesach, one may eat *Matzah*-like crackers which are really *Chametz* or egg-*Matzah*. One may also eat *Matzah* balls or foods containing *Matzah* meal. One may also be lenient for children below the age of Chinuch.

During these days, *Chametz* should not be scattered in a manner that would make it hard to clean and remove before Pesach, or that would allow it to go unnoticed before Pesach.

One should contribute towards **Maot Chittim** which help provide all the Pesach needs of the poor. *You can donate online at www.bdhls.org/pesach.*

Every Jew should be encouraged to **sell his Chametz**, even if there is concern that he will consume it on Pesach. [Obviously, such a person should be educated not to use it.] *You can sell your chametz online at www.bdhls.org/pesach.*

► MONTH OF NISSAN

Tachanun is not recited the entire month. Similarly, *Av Harachamim* and *Tzidkosecha* are omitted each Shabbat.

There is a custom to recite the **Nossi** each of the first twelve days of Nissan, followed by the *Yehi Ratzon* printed in the Siddur. It is recited even by a Kohen and Levi. On the thirteenth day, one recites the selection from "*Zot Chanukat Hamizbeach*" until "*Ken Assah es Hamenorah*", but without reciting the *Yehi Ratzon*.

One may not fast during Nissan, except a *Chosson* and *Kallah* on their wedding day, who fast even on *Rosh Chodesh Nissan*.

During the month of Nissan, one recites the applicable blessing when seeing **blossoming fruit-trees** for the first time.

Haircuts may be taken only until Erev Shabbat, 13th of Nissan (see further).

► CLEANING AWAY THE CHAMETZ

It is important to **maintain a positive and enthusiastic attitude** regarding the preparation efforts for Pesach.

One should remember to **clean or discard any Chametz found in the "less obvious" locations** such as vacuum cleaners, brooms, mops, floor ducts, kitchen walls, car interiors, car-seats, baby carriages, highchairs, briefcases, pocketbooks, phones, mobile devices, computer keyboards and other devices commonly handled when eating.

Items regularly used around *Chametz* (e.g. **cookbooks, Bentchers, Siddurim**) should be stored with the *Chametz* that is sold for Pesach. **Books and toys** should be cleaned well or included in the *Sale of chametz*.

Tablecloths or napkins should not be used if they were starched with a substance that may contain *Chametz*.

Shabbat candlesticks should be cleaned thoroughly. If the usual tray will be used on Pesach, it should be cleaned well.

Garbage bins should be thoroughly cleaned. Council bins should also be cleaned.

New **toothbrushes** should be prepared for Pesach.

A Rav should be consulted regarding the use of **vitamins and medicines** (taken orally) which may contain *Chametz*.

Pet food must be *Chametz*-free but may contain *Kitniyot*. Cages, enclosures and feeding bowls must be thoroughly cleaned.

One does not need to clean behind or under heavy furniture rarely moved, if there are no plans to move it on Pesach itself. [Even if one knows for certain that there is *Chametz* there, one may include it in the *Sale of chametz*.]

► KASHERING

If you will be koshering utensils for Pesach, it should be done under the guidance of one who is well versed in the relevant Laws.

Dishwashers, regular ovens, toaster ovens, microwave ovens, grills and BBQs are not *Kashered* and used for Pesach.

Self-cleaning ovens which reach approximately 480°C/900°F may be *Kashered* by running it through a full clean cycle; the oven door and seals should be cleaned well beforehand.

For **gas cooktops**, the grates are *Kashered* through *Libbun Gommur* (heating the grates until they glow red-hot in the dark). The burners, drip-trays and cooktop surface beneath the grates are *Kashered* by cleaning them thoroughly, after which *Libbun Kal* (heating the metal until the other side is hot enough to scorch paper) is performed. One way to achieve all of this is by turning all the burners on the highest, and covering the entire cooktop with a Blech until the grates glow red-hot, by which time the other components of the cooktop will have reached the heat of *Libbun Kal*. [Do not leave the stove unattended when *Kashering* with this method, and ensure adequate ventilation.]

For **standard electric cooktops** (where the burner coils are exposed), the coils are *Kashered* through *Libbun Gommur* (turning them onto the highest setting until they glow red-hot), while the burners, drip-trays and cooktop surface are *Kashered* by cleaning them thoroughly, after which *Libbun Kal* is performed.

If the cooktop surface cannot be *Kashered* through *Libbun Kal* (e.g. if made of glass or enamel), it may instead be covered with a durable and heat-proof covering or lining.

Cooktop **knobs and backsplashes** should be cleaned well (and some also cover them).

Induction cooktops and electric smoothtops (where the burner coils lie

beneath a flat ceramic glass surface) are not *Kashered* and used for Pesach.

Wooden or laminate tabletops and countertops are *Kashered* by cleaning them thoroughly (including crevices) and waiting 24 hours. Then, after ensuring that the surface is thoroughly dry, one pours boiling water from a kettle that has just been removed from the source of heat, ensuring that the flow of water from the kettle to the entire surface is direct and uninterrupted.

Stone countertops are *Kashered* similarly, but the boiling water is poured over an *Even Meluban* (red-hot stone) which is moved around (or right above) the entire surface as the water is poured over it. The *Even Meluban* remains effective as long as it causes the boiling water to bubble.

Metal countertops and sinks are *Kashered* with boiling water and an *Even Meluban*, in the manner described above. The water should be poured over the lowest surfaces first, before moving upward. Alternatively, they may be *Kashered* through *Libbun Kal* (blowtorching until the other side of the metal is hot enough to scorch paper).

Metal faucets and faucet handles are *Kashered* by pouring boiling water (in the manner described above for tabletops and counters). The hot tap-water should be turned on and running through the interior of the faucet at the time that its exterior is being *Kashered*. Bleach should be poured down the sink drain and onto any crevices between the sink and the sink drain. Any tap filters, aerators, strainers and sponges should be replaced.

The kettle used to boil the water for *Kashering* is customarily reserved for this purpose alone, and is used neither with the *Chametz* nor with the Pesach cooking.

If a tabletop or countertop will be damaged by *Kashering*, or is made of a material that cannot be *Kashered*, one should cover it well instead, ensuring that no liquid is trapped beneath.

Fans, hoods and other areas above stoves and ovens should be cleaned and ideally covered due to the steam that circulates when cooking.

A separate Blech and urn is used for Pesach. Pantries, cupboards, shelves, fridges and freezers (defrosted first) should be thoroughly cleaned with a cleaning agent. The fridge/freezer rubber door seals should be cleaned as well [the interior circulation vents should not be blocked, so as not to cause damage].

► **SALE OF CHAMETZ**

Sale of chametz is effective only if one truly commits to sell his *Chametz* in an unconditional and absolute sale. It is therefore customary to perform a *Kinyan* (act of acquisition) when authorizing the Rav to sell the *Chametz*. [However, this *Kinyan* is not an absolute requirement.]

Sale of chametz occurs before the fifth seasonal hour (12:24pm in Miami) on Friday Erev Shabbat March 26, in keeping with the usual time schedule every other year. Practically, to ensure the Rabbi will include your sale, **please process your sale by Thursday March 25.**

When the householder sells the *Chametz*, his dependents (who dwell with him permanently) do not need to, unless they own *Chametz* independently. *Chametz* belonging to a Shul or public organization should be sold by the office-bearer responsible for finances.

In the sale, one includes all *Chametz* and *Chametz* utensils. Since the actual location of the *Chametz* is also leased to the non-Jew, one should list the full address of each of his personal and business properties, including common-owned properties, preferably concluding with the words “and wherever my *Chametz* may be found”.

If one owns *Chametz* in a different time-zone, or is travelling to a different time-zone for Pesach, he should inform the Rav of his situation for further guidance.

If one is away from home for the entire Pesach: If he arrives at his destination before the night of *Bedikas Chametz*, he includes his entire home in the *Sale of chametz*. If he will still be at home the night of *Bedikas Chametz*, he includes most of his home in *Sale of Chametz*, but excludes a small area so that he can conduct *Bedikas Chametz* (see “*Bedikas Chametz*” section).

► **FAST OF THE FIRSTBORNS – THURSDAY MARCH 25**

This year, the fast of the firstborns is on Thursday the 13th of Nissan. Every male firstborn, as well as the father of a firstborn under the age of Bar Mitzvah, should attend and eat from a *Seudat Mitzvah* such as a *Siyum*, *Brit* or *Pidyon Haben*. They should not eat before partaking of the *Seudat Mitzvah*.

A *Siyum* may be made on a Masechta of Talmud or an entire Seder of Mishna. [The *Siyum* may be made even by a child.]

A Firstborn (or the father of a Firstborn under the age of Bar Mitzvah) who did not hear a *Siyum* must fast.

► **CHAMETZ THIS YEAR**

This year, when Erev Pesach coincides with Shabbat, one may eat *Chametz* until Shabbat morning. In fact, eating *Chametz* is a requirement for the purposes of *Lechem Mishnah* on Friday night and Shabbat morning, given that *Matzah* cannot be used at these times. [See further for details.]

Nevertheless, since *Bedikas Chametz* and *Biur Chametz* cannot be performed in the usual manner on Shabbat, both of these are conducted one day earlier, and their times are equivalent to every other year. Thus, ***Bedikas Chametz* is conducted on Thursday night March 25 at nightfall, and the *Chametz* is burned on Friday morning before 12:24pm.**

From after the time of *Bedikas Chametz*, it is advisable that all *Chametz* be eaten only in one designated area, and it be a place where crumbs are easily cleaned even on Shabbat (as opposed to carpet, or dining furniture with crevices). Young children should not be left unsupervised with *Chametz*.

► **BEDIKAS CHAMETZ PREPARATIONS**

The house should be completely cleaned, the floors swept (including under the beds), and all *Chametz* removed prior to *Bedikas Chametz*.

Anything included in *Sale of chametz* should be securely stored away before *Bedikas Chametz* in a closed area such as a closet (which should be locked or marked). [When extremely necessary, one may access these areas during Pesach, but must avoid remaining there for any length of time, and must not touch the *Chametz* nor open any boxes containing them.]

Chametz that will be eaten from now until Shabbat morning must be placed in a secure location before *Bedikas Chametz*, out of the reach of children and of rodents. A paper bag, single-wick beeswax candle, feather and wooden spoon are prepared for *Bedikas Chametz*.

Ten pieces of bread are put out, each piece less than a *Kezayis*, but all pieces totaling at least a *Kezayis*. Each piece should be wrapped well in paper in order to prevent crumbs. The wrapping material must be

flammable (as opposed to foil) so that the pieces of bread burn well.

A record should be kept of the pieces' locations in case they are not found during the search.

► TIME OF *BEDIKAS CHAMETZ* – THURSDAY MARCH 25

Bedikas Chametz is performed as soon as possible after nightfall (7:58pm), and after davening Maariv. From half an hour prior to Nightfall until after *Bedikas Chametz* (even if running late), one may not eat more than a K'beitzah (57 grams) of bread or Mezonos, drink alcoholic beverages, nap, learn Torah, bathe, haircut, work or perform other absorbing activities unrelated to *Bedikas Chametz*.

If one began these activities prior to this time, he may continue during the half hour before Nightfall, but must stop as soon as it is Nightfall.

One may begin learning during the half hour before Nightfall only if he appoints a Shomer (guardian) who is not learning to remind him to perform *Bedikas Chametz* as soon as it is Nightfall.

► *BEDIKAS CHAMETZ*

One lights the candle before reciting the *Bracha*, and holds it in his right hand during the *Bracha*, in order to begin searching as soon as the *Bracha* is finished.

After the *Bracha*, one should not speak at all prior to beginning the search, even matters related to the search. If one did speak, he must repeat the *Bracha* if his words were unrelated to the search.

After one already began the search, until the conclusion of *Kol Chamiro*, one should not speak matters unrelated to *Bedikas Chametz*.

Nevertheless, if one did speak unnecessarily, he does not repeat the *Bracha*. The search begins in a location right next to where the *Bracha* was recited, and is conducted carefully and thoroughly.

The obligation of *Bedikas Chametz* rests with the householder. Nevertheless, he may delegate part (but preferably not all) of the search to family members over Bar-Bat Mitzvah. Ideally, before spreading out, they should hear his *Bracha* and immediately begin searching in a location right next to where he recited the *Bracha*. Otherwise, they search without a *Bracha*.

One searches by the light of the candle and with a feather. Any *Chametz* found is placed in the paper bag. One must carefully and meticulously search every location into which *Chametz* may have potentially been brought, even if only on occasion, and even if it has already been cleaned for Pesach. Even after all ten pieces are found, one must properly search the remainder of the house. However, one does not need to check the locations that are being leased in the *Sale of Chametz*. One should remember to search his porch, garage and vehicle during or after *Bedikas Chametz*.

After *Bedikas Chametz* is concluded, the bag of ten pieces along with the feather and any remnant of the candle is placed inside a paper bag with the wooden spoon, and stored in a secure location inaccessible to children or rodents.

Afterwards, one recites "*Kol Chamiro*", ensuring that he understands the meaning. [Otherwise, he should recite it in a language that he understands.]

One must also perform *Bedikas Chametz* (or appoint a Shliach to do so) at any other property he is fully or partly responsible for (e.g. workplace, dormitory room, common-owned entryways and facilities rooms) if it is not being sold for Pesach. Ideally, this is done right after *Bedikas Chametz* at home. [The *Bracha* is not recited again; one should therefore have these locations in mind when reciting the *Bracha* at home.] A person must also be delegated to perform *Bedikas Chametz* at the Shul and the Beis Midrash.

If one is vacating his home for the entire Pesach: If he arrives at his destination before the night of *Bedikas Chametz*, he includes his entire home in the *Sale of Chametz*, and performs *Bedikas Chametz* at his destination. [When one is guesting with a host, he may rely on the host's *Bedikas Chametz* and need not perform it himself. Alternatively, he may rent a room from the host with a valid Kinyan and perform *Bedikas Chametz* himself.]

If he will still be at home for the night of *Bedikas Chametz*, he should include most of his home in the *Sale of Chametz*, but exclude a small area in which to conduct *Bedikas Chametz*. He must also perform *Bedikas Chametz* (without a *Bracha*) when he arrives at his destination, unless someone else already performed it there.

If one is away from home for the night of *Bedikas Chametz*, but will be returning on Erev Pesach or during Pesach, he must

conduct *Bedikas Chametz* (including *Kol Chamiro*) the night before he leaves home, without a *Bracha*. [This is in addition to searching at the place he is staying on the night of *Bedikas Chametz*.] Alternatively, he may appoint a Shliach to search his home on the night of *Bedikas Chametz* with a *Bracha*; however, the homeowner must still recite *Kol Chamiro*.

► PESACH AND SEDER PREPARATIONS – FRIDAY MARCH 26

One should familiarize oneself with all the Laws associated with the Seder.

A clean and undamaged kiddush-cup that holds at least a *Revi'is* (86ml) is prepared for all participants.

One should prepare enough red wine to supply four cups for every participant. (White wine is not preferred at the Seder unless it is superior to your red wines.)

One should prepare a sufficient supply of unbroken (and if hand-baked, concave-shaped) *Matzot* for the Seder.

The romaine lettuce should be washed and checked for bugs before Shabbat. For those who are careful about *gebrokhts*, they should also be dried so that they may be eaten together with the *Matzah* at *Korech*.

The horseradish should be ground before Shabbat and placed in an air-tight container to retain its potency.

The *Charoset* should be prepared (with apples, pears and nuts) before Shabbat.

Hard boiled eggs should be prepared before Shabbat for the Seder Plate.

The Shank Bone or Chicken-necks are roasted before Shabbat for the *Zeroah*.

Salt-water is prepared before Shabbat.

Roasted meat or poultry may not be eaten at the Seder, even if it was cooked prior to roasting. However, it may be eaten if it was cooked after roasting.

Yom Tov in general, and the Seder in particular, is an especially appropriate time to host guests (this year – if it is COVID safe).

The Mitzvah of *V'Samechta B'Chagecha* entails eating meat, wine and delicacies; providing new clothing or jewelry for one's wife according to his means; and giving sweets to the children. These should be arranged in advance.

► **EREV SHABBAT HAGADOL MORNING - FRIDAY MARCH 26**

Mizmor L'Todah is recited on this day.

When in Shul, one should clean and remove any *Chametz* in his locker.

The activities regularly prohibited on Erev Pesach may be performed today even after midday. This includes tailoring, sewing, laundering, giving haircuts and meticulous forms of writing.

Any laundry should be tended to before Shabbat because one should not launder on Chol Hamoed.

One should have a haircut in honor of Pesach.

Similarly, nails are trimmed in honor of Pesach. [Another reason to tend to them on Erev Pesach is because they otherwise cannot be trimmed on Chol Hamoed.] This year, one may do so even after midday.

► **BURNING CHAMETZ ON EREV SHABBAT - FRIDAY MARCH 26**

This year, *Biur Chametz* occurs on Erev Shabbat, before the fifth seasonal hour (12:24pm in Miami), in keeping with the usual time every other year. Even so, one may continue to consume *Chametz* until Shabbat morning (see further).

Prior to the end-time of *Biur Chametz*, one should:

- store any *Chametz* for Friday and Shabbat in a secure location.
- remove from his property all garbage that may contain *Chametz*.
- seal all locations included in *Sale of chametz*.

If one is running late, these may be done any time prior to Shabbat.

When Erev Pesach coincides with Shabbat, one may Kasher utensils the entire Friday until evening. One should remember to clean jewelry rings.

Nevertheless, some Poskim advise that all Kashering should be done before 12:24pm, so as not to distinguish from other years.

One should ensure that the pieces of *Chametz* are thoroughly burned before the end-time of *Biur Chametz*. [Nevertheless, if one is running late, the *Chametz* may – and should – be burned the rest of the day, prior to Shabbat. One may also burn the *Chametz* earlier in the morning.]

If still extant, the Lulav & Etrog are burned with the *Chametz*.

The second *Kol Chamiro* is not recited now, but on Shabbat (see further).

► **SHABBAT MEALS PREPARATIONS**

It is advisable, and common practice, that all foods prepared for Shabbat should be Kosher L'Pesach. This is to prevent the risk of *Chametz* scattering, and also because it is Halachically problematic on Shabbat to wash *Chametz* dishes of their contents after their last use. [This concern applies even to disposable tableware, for any *Chametz* that sticks to it would need to be somehow eliminated.]

The only *Chametz* should be the Challah used for *Lechem Mishnah*. One should obtain Challah in precise quantity so that there is enough for everyone to eat, i.e. at least a *Kbeitzah* (a measurement of volume equal to the displacement of 57ml of water) per meal, but minimizing leftovers as much as possible.

It is advisable to prepare disposable tablecloths, tableware and / or napkins for use with the Challah.

Any *Chametz* storage locations which will need to be accessed on Shabbat should not be taped or tied shut, but rather, be sealed in a manner that allows access on Shabbat.

On Erev Shabbat, it is ideal to open the packaging of all the items that will be used during Shabbat and Yom Tov (e.g. wine bottles and *Matzah* boxes).

A 'yahrtzeit candle' that lasts a few days should be lit, in order to light the Festival candles from a pre-existing flame.

► **EREV SHABBAT HAGADOL AFTERNOON - FRIDAY MARCH 26**

It is preferable to refrain from eating a proper meal once the tenth Halachik hour of the day begins (4:24pm in Miami), in order to properly enjoy the Shabbat meal at night. However, one may snack in small quantities.

One gives Tzedakah on Erev Yom Tov for three days – the two days of Yom Tov and Shabbat.

One should arrange a pre-existing flame from which to light the candles on the first and second nights of Pesach.

Candle-lighting is at 7:17pm in Miami, as per a regular Erev Shabbat.

► **SHABBAT HAGADOL NIGHT / MORNING**

The *Challah* of the night and morning meals should be brought out only when it is time to eat it. The *Challah* should be consumed in a manner that will not leave crumbs in one's property, such as by eating it over napkins. After eating the *Challah*, any used napkins should be flushed down the toilet.

Tablecloths and / or tableware should be shaken out over the toilet to remove all crumbs, and then discarded.

As an added precaution, many people choose to eat the *Challah* in another location, such as the porch or backyard, and then return to the main dining area for the remainder of the meal. In this case, one should make Kiddush at the place where the *Challah* will be eaten, and also have in mind the transfer of location when making the *Bracha* of *Hamotzi*. Similarly, one should ensure that the Shabbat candles can be seen from the place where the *Challah* will be eaten.

The Shabbat morning davening is scheduled early, and it should not be prolonged, in order that there be ample time to eat *Chametz* after davening.

► **DESTROYING CHAMETZ ON SHABBAT HAGADOL – SATURDAY MARCH 27**

One must stop eating *Chametz* before 11:21am in Miami, and wash his hands and mouth.

One may still benefit from *Chametz* until the end-time of *Biur Chametz* (12:23pm in Miami).

One should inspect and clean any *Chametz* eating areas (including floors), ensuring that any remaining pieces or crumbs of *Chametz* are flushed down the toilet before the end-time of *Biur Chametz* (12:23pm).

One should also clean his clothes, including pockets and cuffs, of any *Chametz* traces.

Before the end-time of *Biur Chametz*, one recites the second *Kol Chamiro*, ensuring that he understands its meaning. [Otherwise, he should recite it in a language that he understands.]

► **CHAMETZ AFTER THIS TIME**

One cannot benefit from any *Chametz* – even belonging to a non-Jew. One may not assume responsibility for any *Chametz* on Pesach, even if it belongs to a non-Jew.

One may not touch *Chametz* throughout Pesach, unless while destroying it.

One must prevent a gentile employee (such as a household-helper) from bringing *Chametz* onto one's premises. A gentile who is not an employee may enter with *Chametz* and eat it on site, provided that one doesn't thereby assume any responsibility for the *Chametz*. One must also ensure that the gentile removes the *Chametz* from the premises as soon as he leaves, and the area must be cleaned.

► FINDING CHAMETZ AFTER THIS TIME

If one finds *Chametz* on Shabbat – from after the end time of *Biur Chametz* – or Yom Tov, he should cover it immediately without moving it, as it is *Muktzeh*. He should burn it immediately after Yom Tov.

If one finds *Chametz* on Chol Hamoed, or after Pesach, he should burn it immediately.

When burning such *Chametz*, the *Bracha* of *Al Biur Chametz* is recited only when all the following conditions are met:

- It is definite *Chametz*.
- It belongs to him.
- It is a *Kezayis* or bigger.
- It is still Pesach (not before or after).
- It was not in his possession at the time when the Rav sold the *Chametz*.

If a guest mistakenly brings *Chametz* as a gift, one should intend to not acquire it. One should also remember not to handle it directly on Yom Tov, and should follow the instructions above for destroying it.

► SHABBAT HAGADOL AFTERNOON – SATURDAY MARCH 27

Parents should ensure that their children nap during the day so that they are awake and alert for the Seder.

It is forbidden to eat a proper meal once the tenth Halachic hour of the day begins (4:24pm in Miami), in order to eat the *Matzah* at night with a healthy appetite. However, one may snack in small quantities that will not ruin his appetite for the Seder.

One may not perform any preparations on Shabbat for Yom Tov. [However, during *Bein Hashmashot*, one may instruct a non-Jew to prepare that which would be permissible for a Jew to perform on Yom Tov were it not being prepared for the second day.]

After Mincha, the Haggadah is read from "*Avadim Hayinu*" until "*L'chaper Al Kol Avoinoseinu*". This is followed by "*Seder Korban Pesach*".

► MATZAH

It is preferred to use *Matzah* produced from wheat, and not from other grains (such as spelt) unless there are health concerns.

If a *Matzah* folded over during baking, or it has a large bubble, one should not eat of that area or its perimeter (at least 2cm).

► KITNIYOT

Kitniyot (legumes) are not eaten by Ashkenazim on Pesach. Common examples include rice, millet, buckwheat, corn, peas, beans, lentils, sesame seeds, mustard, chickpeas, peanuts, soy and soybeans, tofu, sunflower and poppy seeds.

Kitniyot derived oils are not used, such as canola, corn, peanut, safflower, sesame, sunflower, soybean (often labelled as vegetable oil) or rapeseed (flaxseed) oils.

The status of cottonseed oil is debated, but it is generally regarded as non-*Kitniyot*.

Kitniyot may be used when necessary for the sick, infirm or babies (e.g. infant formulas and nutritional supplements). However, designated utensils should be used, and they should be kept separate from the rest of the Pesach utensils.

One may own and derive benefit from *Kitniyot* on Pesach (such as feeding pets).

► SOME OBSERVED STRINGENCIES

The Arizal stressed the importance of being extra careful to refrain from any possible *chametz* consumption. Historically, different communities and families adhered to different customs. Additionally, commercial food production systems and technologies have radically changed over time, which may change some of the time-old customs.

It is important that all purchased processed foods have a reliable *kosher-l'pesach hechsher*.

Following are some common examples of stringencies:

- Not to eat *gebrokhts* – *Matza* that came in contact with water

• To peel or shell all fruits, vegetable and nuts before use.

• To have a special pot exclusively for boiling eggs.

• To boil and strain sugar before Pesach.

• Not to eat commercially prepared foods (besides *Matzah*, wine, meat and/or oil).

• Not to use spices.

• To use coarse salt and not fine salt.

• Not to eat garlic.

• Not to use food that fell on the floor. (If peelable, one may peel it).

• To thoroughly wash any utensil that fell on the floor, or to set it aside and not use it until the following Pesach.

• Not to eat food prepared outside one's own home.

• To cook as much as possible prior to Pesach, since a speck of *Chametz* that is inadvertently mixed in becomes nullified then, unlike on Pesach itself.

► FIRST NIGHT OF PESACH – SATURDAY MARCH 27

Shabbat ends at 8:10pm. Kiddush should not begin before this time, nor should tasks and preparations required for Yom Tov be conducted before this time.

Vatodienu is recited during the *Amidah* of Maariv. [If one forgot to do so, he does not correct his mistake, but should say *Baruch Hamavdil Bein Koidesh L'Koidesh* before doing anything forbidden on Shabbat but permitted on Yom Tov.]

The candles should be kindled from a pre-existing flame, and only after Shabbat ends (8:10pm). The Brachot are *L'Hadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov* followed by *Shehecheyanu*.

If conducting the Seder elsewhere, one must derive some practical benefit from the candles after *nightfall*.

► HALLEL

The entire Hallel is recited on the first two night and days of Pesach. Half Hallel is recited on the last six days of Pesach. It is preferable to recite Hallel with the Minyan.

► FORGOT TO PREPARE THE SEDER ITEMS

If one forgot to prepare any of the items for the Seder before Shabbat, one can prepare on the first night only what is

necessary for that night, and not for the second night.

One may not grind horseradish on Yom Tov. If it was not done before Shabbat, one may chop it finely on Yom Tov. Alternatively, one can suffice with romaine lettuce.

If one forgot to wash and check the romaine lettuce for bugs, it may be done as usual on Yom Tov.

If one forgot to prepare the *Charoset*, one may grate it on Yom Tov in an irregular way, such as by holding the grater backwards or grating directly onto the tabletop.

If one forgot to prepare the salt-water, it may be prepared as usual on Yom Tov.

► THE SEDER – BOTH NIGHTS

The table should be set with the best utensils and finery – even if not actually needed for the Seder – as an expression of freedom.

The Seder should begin as soon as possible, but only after nightfall (8:10pm).

The *Matzot* should be unbroken. For those using hand-baked *Matza*, they should be concave-shaped, and positioned so that they resemble a receptacle. The three *Matzot* are inserted from bottom to top.

During Kiddush on the first night of Pesach, one recites a total of five Brachot: *Yayin, Kiddush, Ner, Havdallah and Zman*. [If one jumbled the order, he does not need to repeat it in the correct order, unless he reversed the order of Yayin and Kiddush.]

When reciting the *Bracha* of Ner-Candles, one looks at the candle, but does not bring the candles together, nor does one look at his fingernails or bring them close to the flames.

A woman who recites her own Kiddush should not say *Shehecheyanu*, as she did so at candle-lighting.

One leans to the left when drinking the four cups of wine, as well as when eating the *Matzah*.

One should drink red wine for each of the four cups. (White wine is not used at the Seder unless it is superior to one's red wines. Even then, some add a little red wine to color it). If one cannot drink a full cup of wine, he or she may mix it with grape-juice. If even this is impossible, one may use only grape-juice.

Each of the four cups should be entirely consumed without any pause. If this is not

possible, one should keep any pause to an absolute minimum. At the very least, one should drink the majority of the cup, preferably in one swallow. [If even this is not possible, the barest minimum is *Rov Revi'is* (at least 44ml), preferably in one swallow.]

One may drink water or other liquids (other than wine) between the first and second cups of wine. If he intended to do so when he recited Kiddush, then he does not make a *Bracha*; otherwise he recites *Shehakol*. Children who are hungry may snack. However, if they are old enough to understand the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim, they should not eat any *Matzah* until after Maggid.

Although a *Bracha* is not recited at Urchatz, one must still observe all the other Laws of Netilat Yadayim.

One dips the Karpas before making the *Bracha*, and should have in mind the *Marror* and *Korech* when making the *Bracha*. One should eat less than a *Kezayis* of Karpas.

At Yachatz, the *Matzah* is broken into two pieces. [Ideally, the smaller piece should still be a *Kezayis*.] The larger piece is then hidden for the afikomen.

During Maggid, the Haggadah should be recited at a reasonable pace, joyously and in a loud voice, whilst sitting respectfully.

At the *Bracha* of *Lefichocho* at the conclusion of Maggid, one should recite “*min HaPesachim umin HaZevachim*” on the first night of Pesach, and “*min HaZevachim umin HaPesachim*” on the second night of Pesach.

One should endeavor not to speak unrelated matters from the beginning of *Motzi-Matzah* until the end of *Korech*.

For *Motzi-Matzah*, every person with a Kaarah eats two *Kezaysim* of *Matzah*; one *Kezayis* of the Kohen *Matzah* and one *Kezayis* of the Levi *Matzah*. If this is too hard, one may suffice with one *Kezayis* comprised from both of those *Matzot*. The pieces of the Kohen and Levi *Matzah* are eaten together, and not one after the other. One without a Kaarah is given a bit of the Kohen and Levi *Matzah* supplemented by other *Matzah*; they need eat only one *Kezayis* in total. [For *Motzi-Matzah*, one follows the stricter opinion that measures a *Kezayis* as 29 grams.]

The *Matzah* is not dipped into salt.

When eating *Motzi-Matzah*, as well as *Marror, Korech* and Afikomen, one should

consume them in the shortest time frame possible, ideally within four minutes.

Marror requires one *Kezayis* (combined from both the horseradish and romaine lettuce). [For *Marror*, one may follow the lenient opinion that measures a *Kezayis* at approximately 19 grams.]

One should have in mind the *Korech* when making the *Bracha* on the *Marror*.

Korech is comprised of one *Kezayis* of the Yisroel *Matzah*, and one *Kezayis* of *Marror* (combined from both the horseradish and romaine lettuce). [For both the *Matzah* and *Marror* of *Korech*, one may follow the lenient opinion that measures a *Kezayis* as approximately 19 grams.]

The Shulchan Orech meal begins with the egg dipped in salt-water. At this point, the remainder of the Kaarah may be removed from the table. One should not eat the Zeroah.

One does not lean when eating the meal.

One should eat his fill, but pace himself so that he can eat the Afikomen without feeling bloated.

One does not recite a *Bracha* when drinking wine during the meal, as it is included with the *Bracha* over the second cup of wine.

For the Afikomen, one eats two *Kezaysim* of *Matzah*; one to commemorate the Korban Pesach and the other to commemorate the *Matzah* that was eaten with it. As the *Matzah* hidden at the time of Yachatz is likely less than two *Kezaysim*, it should be supplemented with other *Matzah*. Those who do not have a Kaarah are given a little bit of the Afikomen *Matzah* supplemented by other *Matzah*. If one finds it too hard to consume two *Kezaysim*, one may suffice with one *Kezayis*, but should stipulate that he thereby fulfills whichever commemoration is the primary one. [For Afikomen, one may follow the lenient opinion that measures a *Kezayis* as approximately 19 grams.]

We are particular about eating the Afikomen before midnight (1:25am) only on the first night. On the second night, the Seder is conducted at greater length, with greater elaboration of the Haggadah.

One does not eat or drink anything after the Afikomen, aside from the last two cups of wine.

When opening the door for *Eliyahu HaNavi* at *Shefoch Chamoscha*, (some of) the candles are taken to the door. Those who open the door say *Shefoch Chamoscha*

whilst standing at the door, whereas everyone else recites it whilst remaining seated at the table.

Rabbi Shalom Dovber of Lubavitch once said, "During the Seder, and especially when the door is opened at *Shefoch Chamoscha*, one must think that he should merit to be a *mentsch*, and then Hashem will help. "Don't request physical matters; ask for spiritual matters!"

At the conclusion of the Seder, the wine from the Kos Shel Eliyahu is returned to the bottle. [Wine should first be added to the Kos Shel Eliyahu before returning it to the bottle, so that the wine in the bottle does not become *Pagum*.]

Before going to sleep on the first night of Pesach, one recites only the first paragraph of Shma and the *Bracha* of Hamapil. On the second night, *Krias Shma She'al Hamitah* is recited as per every Yom Tov.

► YA'ALEH VEYAVO IN BENTCHING

If one forgets *Ya'aleh Veyavo* in bentching, but remembers before saying Hashem's name at Bonei Yerushalayim, he goes back. If one remembered after that, but before beginning the next *Bracha*, he recites the extra *Bracha* as printed in the Bentcher. If one began even the first word of the next *Bracha*, one must begin bentching again if it is one of the two required meals of Yom Tov, but not if it is a third optional meal, or Chol Hamoed.

The *Horachamon* for Yom Tov is recited.

► FIRST DAY: TEFILAS TAL

After the Kaddish right before Musaf, the Gabbai announces "*Morid Hatal*". From that point on, one recites "*Morid Hatal*" in *Amidah*.

If one heard this announcement before davening Shacharit, he recites "*Morid Hatal*" in the *Amidah* of Shacharit as well. [One should avoid such a situation.]

The Chazzan recites the special Tefillah of Tal during the repetition of *Amidah*.

If one mistakenly said "*Morid HaGeshem*":

- If one realized before saying Hashem's name at the end of the *Bracha*, he returns to the beginning of the *Bracha*.
- If one already concluded the *Bracha*, he must return to the beginning of the *Amidah*.

- If one did not realize his error until the time for that Tefillah passed, he must daven the next Tefillah twice. [E.g. If he said "*Morid HaGeshem*" at Shacharit, he must recite the Mincha *Amidah* twice.]

If one is in doubt whether he said *Morid Hatal*, for the first thirty days he should assume that he did not, and after thirty days he should assume that he did.

► FIRST AFTERNOON OF PESACH

If possible, one avoids beginning a meal after the tenth Halachic hour of the day begins (4:21pm in Miami), so that he has an appetite for the second Seder.

One may not perform any preparations on the first day for the second night and day of Yom Tov. [However, during *Bein Hashmashot*, one may instruct a non-Jew to prepare that which would be permissible for a Jew to perform on Yom Tov were it not being prepared for the second day.]

► SECOND NIGHT AND DAY OF PESACH

The candles should be kindled with a pre-existing flame, and not before *Nightfall* (8:10pm). The *Brachot* are *L'Hadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov* followed by *Shehecheyanu*. Tasks and preparations required for the second day of Yom Tov should not be conducted before this time.

Sefirat Haomer is recited at Maariv, or before beginning the Seder.

During the day meal of the second day of Pesach, it is appropriate to commemorate the anniversary of Esther's feast which culminated in the hanging of Haman.

► V'TEIN BRACHA

Beginning on the first night of Chol Hamoed, we start reciting *V'tein Bracha*. If one said *Tal Umotor*, but realized before saying Hashem's name at the end of that *Bracha*, he returns to the start of the *Bracha*.

If one already concluded the *Bracha*:

- If one already concluded the *Bracha*, he must go back to the *Bracha* of Boreich Aleinu, and continue from there to the end of *Amidah*. If he already began reciting (the second) *Yih'yu L'ratzon*, he must repeat the entire *Amidah*.
- If one did not realize his omission until the time for that Tefillah has passed, he must daven the next Tefillah twice. [E.g. If

one said *V'tein Tal Umotor Livrocho* during Shacharit, he must recite the *Amidah* of Mincha twice.]

• If one said *V'tein Tal Umotor Livrocho* in Mincha of Erev Shabbat, he does not repeat the *Amidah* of Friday night.

• If one is in doubt whether he said *V'tein Bracha*, for the first thirty days he should assume that he did not, and after thirty days he should assume that he did.

► YA'ALEH VEYAVO IN DAVENING

If one forgets *Ya'aleh Veyavo* in davening, but remembers before saying Hashem's name at the end of *Hamachazir Shechinato L'tziyon*, he goes back. If he remembered between the conclusion of that *Bracha* and *Modim*, he recites it at that point, without going back. If he remembers after that point, but before taking three steps back, he returns to the beginning of *Retzei*. If he remembers after taking three steps back, *Amidah* is repeated.

If one is unsure whether he recited *Ya'aleh Veyavo*, *Amidah* is repeated.

If one forgot *Ya'aleh Veyavo* during Shacharit, and only realized after Musaf, he does not repeat Shacharit.

If one forgot *Ya'aleh Veyavo* during Mincha or Maariv, and only realized after the Zman Tefillah has passed, he must recite an additional *Amidah* in the next Tefillah, as compensation.

► CHOL HAMOED – MARCH 30-APRIL 2

On the first night of Chol Hamoed, Havdalah is recited without *Besomim* and candles. *V'Yiten Lecha* is not recited.

Mizmor *L'Todah* is not recited during Pesach.

Half-Hallel is recited during Chol Hamoed as well as on the last days of Pesach.

On Chol Hamoed:

- One wears finer clothing.
- One washes for *Matzah*, eats meat and drinks a cup of wine every day.
- One allocates more time for learning.

Many activities are possibly prohibited during Chol Hamoed, including (but not limited to) business activity, trade, moving homes, gardening, sewing, laundering (unless for children who soil their clothing frequently, but only as required), preparing food for after Yom Tov, cutting nails (unless it was done on Erev Pesach as well) and taking haircuts.

For the sake of Chol Hamoed or the last days of Yom Tov, one may professionally repair any item which is directly involved in food preparation (e.g. oven or fridge), or which provides direct benefit to the body (e.g. the plumbing, electricity or air-conditioning), provided that it wasn't practical to fix prior to Yom Tov (e.g. it broke on Yom Tov).

One should avoid writing. If it cannot be deferred until after Chol Hamoed, one should write with a *Shinui*.

Unless needed for Yom Tov, one should not shop for utensils, appliances or clothing. [One may be lenient if the item is significantly discounted and it cannot be purchased later for a similar price.]

Routine medical exams that can easily wait should not be scheduled for Chol Hamoed.

► EREV SHVI'I SHEL PESACH – FRIDAY APRIL 2

One gives Tzedakah for the two days of Yom Tov.

One should arrange a pre-existing flame from which to light the candles on the second night of Yom Tov.

Since Shvi'i Shel Pesach is Shabbat, the candles should be kindled at the usual eighteen minutes before sunset (6:20pm), and certainly not after sunset (7:38pm).

The *Bracha* is Shel Shabbat v'Shel Yom Tov, but *Shehecheyanu* is not recited.

If eating out, one should ensure that practical benefit is derived from the candles after Yom Tov begins.

► SHVI'I SHEL PESACH NIGHT - FRIDAY APRIL 2

Kabbalat Shabbat begins with Mizmor L'Dovid, and not with L'chu Neranenah. In Lecho Dodi, we say B'Simcha U'vetzahala.

Since it is Shabbat, all the Shabbat selections are added in the *Amidah* of Pesach.

The custom of avoiding Kiddush between the sixth and seventh hour on Friday night applies even when it falls on Shvi'i Shel Pesach.

Shalom Aleichem and Eishes Chayil (as well as all the other selections prior to Kiddush) are recited, but in an undertone. Yom Hashishi is then recited aloud, followed by Hagofen and the Pesach Kiddush (including the Shabbat additions). *Shehecheyanu* is not recited.

There is a custom to remain awake the entire night of Shvi'i Shel Pesach and study Torah.

► SHVI'I SHEL PESACH DAY – SHABBAT APRIL 3

All the Shabbat selections are added in the *Amidah* of Shacharit and Musaf.

As it is Shabbat, the special selections normally added for Yom Tov when opening the Aron Hakoidesh are omitted.

The congregation stands and faces the Sefer Torah while the Shirah is read.

One may not perform any preparations on the first day for the second night and day of Yom Tov.

► ACHARON SHEL PESACH NIGHT – SATURDAY APRIL 3

Shabbat ends at 8:13pm. Tasks and preparations required for Yom Tov should not be conducted before this time.

Vatodienu is recited during the *Amidah* of Maariv.

The candles should be kindled with a pre-existing flame, and only after Shabbat ends (8:13pm). The *Bracha* of Shel Yom Tov is recited, but *Shehecheyanu* is not recited.

If eating elsewhere, one must derive some practical benefit from the candles after *nightfall*.

For Kiddush on Achron Shel Pesach night, one recites a total of four Brachot: *Yayin, Kiddush, Ner and Havdallah*. [If one jumbled the order, he does not need to repeat it in the correct order, unless he reversed the order of Yayin and Kiddush.]

Shehecheyanu is not recited.

When reciting the *Bracha* of Ner, one looks at the candle, but does not bring the candles together, nor does one look at his fingernails or bring them close to the flames.

► ACHARON SHEL PESACH DAY – SUNDAY APRIL 4

Yizkor is recited before Musaf. Those who leave the Shul for Yizkor may recite "Av Harachamim" after Yizkor if they wish to.

After Mincha and before sunset, we wash for *Matzah* and participate in a Seudat Moshich.

One may technically eat *Chametz* during the Seudas Moshich after *Nightfall*.

During Bentching, *Ya'aleh Veyavo* (and Horachamon) is recited, even if it is already after *Nightfall*.

On Motzei Pesach, Havdalah is recited without Besomin and candles. V'Yiten Lecha is not recited.

► ISRU CHAG

One should wait a short period of time after Pesach before eating *Chametz*, in order to allow time for the Rov to repurchase the *Chametz*.

Isru Chag is celebrated with additional and festive foods.

Best wishes for a Kosher un Freilichen Pesach!