

PREPARING FOR AND CELEBRATING PASSOVER IN YOUR HOME

Pre-Passover Information: Food and Utensils During Pesach (Passover)

The term *Chametz* or Leaven is applied not only to foods, the use of which are to be avoided during *Pesach*, but also to the dishes and utensils in which foods are prepared or served during the year, and which dishes or utensils may not be used during *Pesach* except as herein indicated.

1. FORBIDDEN FOR USE: The following foods are forbidden for use during *Pesach*: Leavened bread, cakes, biscuits and crackers, cereals, coffee substance derived from cereals, wheat, barley, oats, rice, dry peas and dry beans. All liquids which contain ingredients or flavors made from grain alcohol.

2. PERMITTED FOODS:

A. REQUIRING NO “KOSHER L’PESACH” LABEL. The following foods are permitted in unopened packages or containers. They require no “*Kosher L’Pesach*” label: Natural coffee, sugar, tea, salt, pepper, vegetables (except peas and beans; string beans are permitted.)

B. FROZEN FRUITS AND VEGETABLES. Fruits and those vegetables normally permitted for Passover use are permitted in their frozen state.

C. IF CERTIFIED FOR PASSOVER USE BY RABBINICAL AUTHORITY. *Matzah*, *matzah* flour, Passover noodles, candies, cakes, beverages, canned and processed foods, milk, butter, jams, cheese, jellies, relishes, dried fruits, salad oils, vegetable gelatin, shortenings, vinegar. Wines and liquors are permitted if they are certified by competent rabbinical authority as fit for Passover use. Labels and tags marked “*Kosher L’Pesach*” are of no value unless they bear rabbinical signature.

3. Only Dishes and Utensils Specially Reserved for Passover Should be Used with the Following Exceptions:

A. The silverware, knives, forks and spoons made wholly of metal though used during the year, may be used on Passover if thoroughly scoured and immersed in boiling water. All table glassware is permitted after thorough scouring. Fine translucent chinaware, if not used for a year, is permitted.

B. Metal pots used for cooking purposes only (but not for baking) if made wholly of metal, though used during the year, may be used on Passover if first thoroughly scoured and immersed in boiling water.

C. Utensils used for baking during the year cannot be used during Passover.

4. Earthenware, enamelware and porcelain utensils used during the year may not be used on *Pesach*. Any vessel which cannot be thoroughly cleaned should not be used.

5. The stove is prepared for *Pesach* by thoroughly scrubbing and cleaning of all parts and turning on full flame in the bake oven and all the grates.

6. A dishwashing machine may be used for Passover after thoroughly scouring with boiling water and the use of a new tray.

BEDIKAT CHAMETZ: CEREMONY FOR REMOVING LEAVEN

Because Passover begins on Monday evening, April 10th, the ceremony of *Bedikat Chametz* will take place Sunday night, April 9th. The Biblical injunction, “even the first day shall you put away leaven out of your houses” (Exodus 12:15) was interpreted by the Rabbis as referring to the day preceding Passover. To make sure that “there be no leaven in your houses” (Exodus 12:19), the Rabbis instituted a ceremonial search for leavened substances.

As a religious ceremony, *Bedikat Chametz* is preceded by the benediction: “*Baruch atta Adonai Eloheynu melech ha-olam, asher kidshanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu al biur chametz.* Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has commanded us concerning the removal of leaven.” It is customary to place pieces of leaven in the house so the search will not be in vain. The leaven is gathered with a feather, wooden spoon and a candle. When the search is completed an Aramaic formula is recited, renouncing ownership of any leaven that may have escaped detection. (Children love this ceremony!)

The next morning (Monday, April 10th) after breakfast the leaven collected the night before is burned in a ceremony called *Biur Chametz*. A similar Aramaic formula is recited again renouncing ownership of any leaven. From this moment on no leaven may be eaten until the end of *Pesach*.

SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR HOME SEDER

1. Make sure that everyone has a *Haggadah*. Select the one that you like best and is suited for the participants. The seder has been characterized as a “hurried trip through Jewish history via the *Haggadah* - a panoramic cross section of Jewish life.”
2. Don't feel that your seder must be too formal. You may interpolate into the various parts of the service your own comments. You may ask others to do the same. Keep the service moving along. But don't feel that it has quite the same formality as a synagogue service. The seder is a unique admixture of the solemn and the joyful.
3. Study the *Haggadah* before the night of the seder. Decide in advance which parts you can do in Hebrew and which in English.
4. Rotate the reading of the parts of the *Haggadah* among those at the table. Some will read in English; others will read in Hebrew. Some will sing the songs in one style; others will use another melody. The very melange of the Hebrew dialects and the variations in the manner of reading portions of the service will illustrate the diversity of Jewish life and add a special flavor to the proceedings.
5. Have the guests recite as many of the blessings as possible in unison, and even certain segments can be read in unison so as to engage the attention of everyone.

THE SEDER TABLE should be set as beautifully as possible with flowers, fine silverware and sparkling linen in addition to lighted candles over which a blessing should be recited.

On the table, there is a decorative plate which contains the symbols of Pesach: The *Marror*, the bitter herb, which leaves the bitter taste of slavery on our mouths; the *Charoset*, the mixture of apple, nuts and wine, reminiscent of the mortar used in the work of slave labor in olden days when the Jews made bricks for Pharaoh. The roasted egg recalls the special sacrifice offered in the Temple on all holidays; the roasted lamb bone stands for the paschal lamb which our ancestors ate this night each year before the destruction of our Temple, and the parsley and salt water. The parsley, eaten to indicate that Pesach is a spring festival, is dipped in salt water to remind us of the tears of the Hebrew slaves.

THE AFIKOMAN is another symbol of Passover. Early in the service, the middle Matzah of the three that are on a plate covered by a napkin is broken in two. One portion is wrapped in a napkin and is hidden until the meal is finished. This portion is known as the *Afikoman*. The custom of hiding the *Afikoman* has developed from a desire to keep children who are at the *seder* alert until the conclusion. A prize is given to the child who later finds the *Afikoman*. (You can give a prize to all the children recognizing their hard work in looking for the *afikoman*.)

THE FOUR QUESTIONS which are asked by the youngest child (or all the children) are called *Mah Nishtanah*, the first two Hebrew words of the questions. The narrative of the *Haggadah* is the reply.

THE CUP OF ELIJAH is kept filled with wine on the table in anticipation of the coming of Elijah pictured as the herald of the great Messianic era when all people will accept God's rule. During the service each person drinks four cups of wine which symbolizes the four fold promise of redemption which God pledged to Israel.

HALLEL. Throughout the *seder*, we recite certain Psalms of David. Because they are psalms of praise, we speak of them as *Hallel*, which is the Hebrew word for praise. These psalms are regarded as the oldest portion of our *Haggadah* ritual.

The *seder* is an occasion of joyous family reunion. A little effort on your part will bring you the satisfaction of knowing that you have created an inspiring event in your child's life which will remain a happy memory.

PASSOVER ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAOT CHITTIM - The custom of donating money to a *Maot Chittim* Fund immediately before Passover is an ancient one. *Maot Chittim* means “portions of wheat,” referring to wheat needed to bake *matzah*. Since during Passover Jews may not eat bread or products that ferment, a special fund is established to assist the poor in purchasing Passover necessities. Please consider helping those not as fortunate as you are and send your contribution to the Rabbi Ira L. Korinow Chesed Fund.

Checks can be made out to “Temple Emanu-El” and indicate “*Maot Chittim*” on the memo line.

MECHIRAT CHAMETZ -It is customary before Passover to free ourselves of leaven in our homes via “*Mechirat Chametz*,” the selling of the leaven. Rabbi Korinow will be pleased to assist in the process. Please call him at the Temple office or fill in the written agreement to be found below and mail it to Rabbi Korinow with a contribution to buy it back after Passover. *Chametz* should be sold by the morning of Monday, April 10th.

PROJECT MAZON - In addition to selling your *chametz*, you may wish to donate this food to those who are hungry in the community. If you can bring whatever food items you have to the Temple office by noon on Monday, April 10th, we will deliver it to a local organization for distribution to the needy. A monetary contribution can also be made to “MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger,” of which Temple Emanu-El is a supporting congregation. For an envelope, please call the Temple Office.

SHARE YOUR PASSOVER SEDER - Passover has traditionally been a time when families, relatives and non-relatives join together in celebration of the Passover *seder*. Many small families band together for the *seder*. Single individuals, like college students who are away from home, or others who have no family, need to be invited to a *seder*. Please call the Temple office to express your desire to be invited to a seder, or to express your desire to invite another family or individual to your *seder*. The Temple staff will serve as sensitive and careful Passover *seder* matchmakers.

Authorization for the Selling of Chametz

I authorize Rabbi Ira Korinow to sell my *chametz* to someone who is not Jewish in the community.
I also agree to buy back my *chametz* at the end of Passover.

Enclosed is my contribution to *tzedakah* (charity) for \$ _____ .

signature

Please complete and return with a check made out to
“Temple Emanu-El” for any amount to:

Rabbi Ira Korinow
Temple Emanu-El
514 Main Street
Haverhill, MA 01830