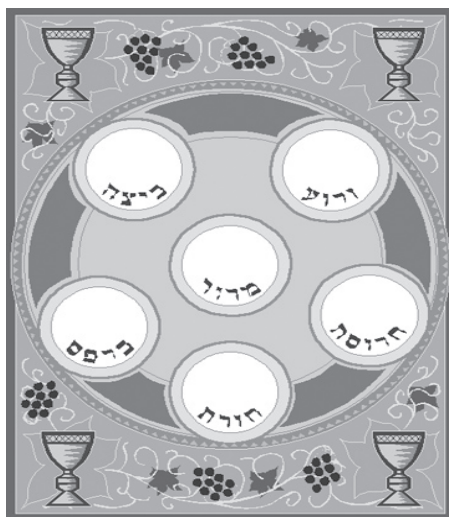


HUNTINGTON JEWISH CENTER

Passover Guide

Prepared by Rabbi Neil Kurshan

5771 - 2011



April 2011

Dear Congregants,

In this insert you will find a number of items which I hope will facilitate your Passover preparations and enhance your Sedarim.

The following materials have been included as preparation aids:

1. An authorization form for the selling of Chametz, to be returned to the synagogue office by Monday morning, April 18th before 8:00am.

2. An outline of ceremonies of preparation which precede Passover.

3. A schedule of Passover services.

4. **A new section titled “Creative Ideas for the Seder.”**

The following materials have been included to be used as supplemental to your Sedarim:

1. Seder Ritual of Remembrance.

This ceremony commemorates the victims of the Holocaust and can be used immediately following the third cup of wine.

2. Matzah of Unity. This prayer for Jewish unity reflects our hope for peace among all Jews.

Baked goods remain a particular problem. To the best of my knowledge, only a handful of bakeries on Long Island provide Kosher for Passover items. Signs indicating “Passover Products” or “Passover Style” are not acceptable certification of kashruth. Local bakeries acceptable during the remainder of the year are not acceptable on Passover.

We have not reprinted in this booklet the sections on “Kashering” and “Permitted and Forbidden Foods.” New and updated details can be found at www.RabbinicalAssembly.org. Click on: “Passover Guide 5771” under “Hot Topics”.

If you have any questions not answered in this Bulletin, please do not hesitate to call me. My family and I wish you and your families a Chag Kasher V'Sameach-A Happy Passover.

Sincerely yours,
Neil Kurshan, Rabbi

PASSOVER PREPARATIONS

5771 - 2011

Definition of CHAMETZ: In Exodus 12:15 the Bible tells us, “Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the very first day you shall remove leaven from your houses...” The Rabbis specified five grains which can become chametz: wheat, barley, spelt, rye, and oats. Ashkenazic authorities added to this list rice and kitniot, or legumes (including beans, peas, lentils, corn and maize, millet, and mustard). Sephardic authorities prohibit only the five specified grains, thus Sephardic Jews are allowed to eat legumes and rice during Passover.

MECHIRAT CHAMETZ - The Selling of Leaven: According to the Biblical injunction that “no leaven shall be seen or found in your possession,” during Passover, one must dispose of all non-Pesach foods for the full week of Passover. See page titled Mechirat Chamez, the Selling of Chametz, toward the back of this booklet for detailed explanation.

BEDIKAT CHAMETZ - The Search for Leaven: Taking place the evening before the first Seder, (except when Passover begins on a Saturday night), this ceremony is the climax of the Passover preparation. Ten pieces of chametz are hidden around the house. The family gathers together with a candle for lighting the way, a feather for brushing-up the chametz, and a wooden spoon onto which the chametz is brushed. If you prefer, a flashlight and small hand broom work equally well. Everything can be burned the next day with the rest of the leaven. The ceremony should involve the children and be performed immediately after supper. The prayers to be recited are found at the front of any Haggadah. The search should be conducted on **Sunday evening, April 17.**

BIUR CHAMETZ - The Burning of Leaven: The crumbs of bread that have been gathered the night before are put together in a bundle and burned the morning before Passover. The appropriate prayers can be found in any Haggadah. **The burning of Chametz should be done Monday morning, April 18.**

CREATIVE IDEAS FOR THE SEDER

5771 • 2011

Each year the rituals of the Seder bring us back to Egypt to relive the suffering of slavery and the miracle of liberation. This year we have watched as many peoples in the Middle East have begun their own journey from oppression to freedom. The challenge of the Seder is to invoke our collective memory and make it come alive. Here are some creative suggestions for giving your Seders added life.

SEDER WITH ONLY ADULTS

The Uprisings Against Oppression in the Middle East

This year devote the Maggid section of the Seder to a discussion of the recent popular uprisings in the Middle East. Is the journey toward freedom in many of the Arab nations similar to our own journey out of Egypt? Does it make sense to speak of the revolt of the Egyptians as their own Exodus from Egypt? What are the implications of the political changes in the Middle East for Israel? In what ways do the uprisings in the Middle East give greater meaning to our own Seders?

Pick a Theme and Send out Questions in Advance

Come up with a theme and send it out to all your Seder guests in advance. Examples: What does freedom mean to you? What was the time in our life when you felt least free? What have been the major liberation movements of the past 100 years? Who is the leading spokesperson for freedom in the modern world today? What types of renewal do you see for yourself this year?

SEDER WITH ADULTS AND CHILDREN

Bring an Object for the Seder Plate

Ask guests to bring an object that is not normally found on the Seder table, but that you think could belong there for some reason. The object could be anything having to do with freedom, oppression, simplicity, the desert, Egypt, Israel, hope for a better world etc. The only other guidelines are that it should be small and not chametz. Collect all the objects at the beginning of the Seder and put them on a second Seder plate on the table. During the Maggid section of the Seder pass the plate around the table and ask each person to take an object and explain why they think it is on the plate. Then have the person who brought the object explain why they brought it.

Tell Your Family's Exodus Story

How did your family get to America? If there are grandparents at your Seder, it is especially nice for them to recount the family story. What is the exodus story of your guests?

Games

Random Objects--Have the children go around the house and put random objects in a bag (at least as many objects as there are people at your Seder table). Pass the bag around the Seder table, and ask each person to relate his/her object to some aspect of the Exodus story.

Seder Bingo

Make the bingo cards in advance and laminate to use in future years. Before the Seder fill in the squares with different words from the Haggadah that will occur during the Seder. Buy stickers (or use marshmallows) to mark each word as it occurs in the Seder. Words might include Charoset, Burning Bush, Mahnishtanah, Afikoman, Matzah, Dayenu, Elijah, etc. The children in your family can also help make up the list for the bingo cards.

Seder Taboo

If your kids or your adult friends are into Taboo, have them make up cards related to Pesach. Then you switch the sets of cards so nobody knows the words.

Seder Ritual of Remembrance

This service, in memory of the six million Jews who perished in the worst oppression in the modern world, may be read after the THIRD of the four cups of wine, just before the door is opened for the symbolic entrance of the Prophet Elijah.

The Jews in Bergen-Belsen had no matzot for Pesach 1944. It was decided that it was permissible to eat Chametz, and that the following prayer should be recited before eating:

Prayer recited in Bergen-Belsen before eating Chametz:

“Our Father in Heaven, behold, it is evident and known to You that it is our desire to do Your will and to celebrate the festival of Pesach by eating matzah and by observing the prohibition against Chametz. But our hearts are pained that the enslavement prevents us from doing so, and our lives are in danger. Behold, we are ready to fulfill Your commandment, ‘And you shall live by them and not die by them.’ Therefore, our prayer to You is that You may keep us alive and save us and rescue us speedily so that we may observe Your commandments and do Your will and serve You with a perfect heart. Amen.”

On this Seder night, we recall with anguish and with love our martyred brothers and sisters, the six million Jews of Europe, who were destroyed at the hands of a tyrant more fiendish than Pharaoh. Their memory will never be forgotten. Their murderers will never be forgotten.

Trapped in ghettos, caged in death camps, abandoned by an unseeing or uncaring world, Jews gave their lives in acts that sanctified God’s name and the name of His people, Israel. Some rebelled against their tormentors, fighting with makeshift weapons, gathering the last remnants of their failing strength in peerless gestures of courage and defiance. Others went to their death with their faith in God miraculously unimpaired.

Unchecked, unchallenged, evil ran rampant and devoured the holy innocents. But the light of the Six Million will never be extinguished. Their glow illumines our path. And we will teach our children and our children’s children to remember them with reverence and with pride.

All sing ANI MA’AMIN (“I Believe”), the song of the martyrs in the ghettos and liquidation camps:

“I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah:
And though he may tarry, none the less do I believe!”

אָנִי מֵאֲמִין בְּאֵמוּנָה שְׁלֵמָה, בְּבִיאַת הַמָּשִׁיחַ וְאֵף עַל פִּי
שִׁיתְמַהֲמֵי, עִם כָּל זֶה אַחֲכֶה לוֹ בְּכָל יוֹם
שְׂיָבוֹא.

Ani ma-amin be-emunah sh’leima b’viat ha-mashiach v’af al pi
she-yitzmahmei-a im kol zeh achakeh lo b’chol yom sheyavo.

Schedule of Passover Services

5771 - 2011

Monday, April 18.....7:00 a.m.

Fast of the First Born and Siyyum

An early morning service in the Lief Chapel will be followed by a study session and a light meal sponsored by the Men's Club to break the fast. All first born and others are welcome.

Monday, April 18

Candle Lighting7:15 p.m.

Tuesday, April 19.....9:30 a.m.

Shacharit, First Day

Candle Lighting7:56 p.m.

Wednesday, April 20.....9:30 a.m.

Shacharit, Second Day

Sunday, April 24.....7:30 p.m.

Mincha, Maariv, Seventh Day

Candle Lighting7:20 p.m.

Monday, April 25.....9:30 a.m.

Shacharit, Seventh Day

We will honor our Shabbat and Weekly Torah Readers during services

Monday, April 25.....7:30 p.m.

Mincha, Maariv, Eighth Day

Candle Lighting8:03 p.m.

Tuesday, April 26.....9:30 a.m.

Shacharit, Yizkor, Eighth Day

Yizkor will be recited during services on the Eighth Day
Members of the Congregation will chant Shir HaShirim (Song of Songs)
on Shabbat morning, April 23rd

(All times reflect Daylight Savings Time)

SIYYUM - THE FAST OF THE FIRST BORN

The Torah relates that the first born of the Israelites were spared from the last plague which was visited upon the Egyptians. As an act of gratitude and as a means of reenacting a great event of ancient history, the custom has arisen to have all the Bechorim (first born) fast on Erev Pesach. As a substitution for this fast they may participate in some sacred study in the synagogue on the morning before Pesach. Thus the fast is obviated while the purpose is enhanced. There will be a service and study session Monday morning, April 18th beginning at 7:00 AM. The Men's Club will sponsor a light breakfast following services.

THE MATZAH OF UNITY

(To be recited during the Seder at Yachatz—when breaking the middle Matzah)

Pesach is a wonderful time to be together as one Jewish family, connecting our symbols with our actions, our rituals with our ethics.

We recall springtime as we eat the green vegetable Karpas.

May we remember that it symbolizes a renewal of nature and the human spirit.

We recall our people's tears and suffering as we dip into the saltwater.

May we remember our people's past oppressions and care for those who still have tears and pain.

We recall the bitterness of slavery as we eat the Maror.

May we remember the plight of the poor and the downtrodden and alleviate their distress.

We recall our servitude to Pharaoh as we eat the Matzah, the bread of affliction.

May we remember God's redemption of our people and how Matzah became the first food eaten in freedom.

Pesach is a beloved holiday, not only because we recall our freedom, but also because we share our concerns for all in need. We cannot only taste the foods. We have to remember our responsibilities as Jews to reach out and assist others with our tzedakah, our charitable obligations, and through our gemilut hasadim, our acts of loving kindness.

Let us now take the middle Matzah and divide it in half. As we break this Matzah and set it aside, we link ourselves symbolically with all Jews throughout the world, especially those who were broken from the community of Israel for so long and have only recently rejoined Klal Yisrael, in their native lands and in the land of Israel.

Our Seder meal will not conclude until the missing piece of Matzah is found and returned to the table. The Matzah, when restored shows the desire of our people to be together as one at peace. As Jews we are a people with a sacred connection. May this Passover be a time of recommitment to our people and our faith.

HAGGADAH SUGGESTIONS-Don't waste time having everyone find the same page in ten different Haggadot. The Conservative Movement Haggadah, [The Feast of Freedom](#), is available from the HJC Judaica Shop. The pictures in this Haggadah are fantastic sources for discussion and the commentary helps in understanding the Seder.

A wonderful Haggadah with enough material to sustain different Seders for ten years is *A Different Night*. If you buy this Haggadah also purchase the *Leaders' Guide* which includes sections titled *The "Jazz Haggadah," "Young Children at the Seder," "Short Cuts Through the Haggadah,"* and *"Recalling Great Seders"* and much more. This is the best Haggadah available if you are planning a family Seder. It can also be obtained through our Judaica Shop or by contacting the American Friends of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Englewood, N.J.

Don't be scared off by the expense of buying 20 Haggadot. We bought ours 20 years ago for \$200. That works out to an approximate cost of \$10/year—far less than we spend each year for Passover food.

THE DETAILS OF PASSOVER ARE OVERWHELMING — HOW DO I BEGIN?

(edited from a Passover Guide by Rabbi Raphael Rank)

Pesach doesn't just happen. Like every other celebration in life, it requires planning and preparation. If you don't come from an observant family, all the rules and regulations may seem overwhelming. If you find yourself doubting whether you could ever successfully prepare for Pesach, read on. This section of the Guide will help you understand what needs to be done in order to create Pesach.

SPRING CLEANING

Your observant friends may have told you about all the cleaning that they do prior to Pesach. Pretty impressive, isn't it? Nevertheless, at the risk of disillusioning you, it must be said that much of what they do, you do too, but you may call it "spring cleaning."

A simple way to affirm your identity as a Jew is to continue your ritual spring cleaning, but his year, use Pesach as your deadline for completion. House cleaning is what an observant Jew does before Pesach. You can do that, too. But this year, add a special dimension to the cleaning: ridding your house of hametz.

GET RID OF THE OBVIOUS HAMETZ

Without delving into the technicalities of hametz, consider the bottom line: During Pesach, Jewish homes should have no breads, bagels, doughnuts, muffins, pizza, or pasta products. That means cleaning out the freezer as well. We do not eat these products within the home or outside the home for the entire eight days of the festival.

WHY SHOULD I BOTHER?

Good question. Of course, we don't ask why we should engage in spring cleaning. The answer there is somewhat clear. The house has been locked up for the winter. Bedding needs laundering, windows need washing, rooms need airing, etc. We engage in spring cleaning to freshen up our physical space. But like our homes, our neshamot or souls also require a cleaning. We get rid of hametz to freshen up our spiritual space. Some rabbis have likened hametz to "sin," noting that the term itself even sounds like "het," the Hebrew term for sin. Because leavening causes fermentation that makes a product swell, hametz is likened to pride or arrogance. We get rid of all the bread and pastas for eight days, all the hametz

around us, and remember that a humble life is a refreshing life—the most successful life to lead.

BUT I CAN'T EAT MATZAH FOR EIGHT DAYS!

Surprise — you don't have to. According to the rabbis we are obligated to eat matzah on the first two nights only. The rest of the week we may eat matzah, but are under no obligation to do so.

SO IS THAT WHAT A SEDER IS - A MEAL WITH MATZAH?

A seder without matzah would certainly be pointless. But it is good to remember that a seder is more than just a meal. It's a discussion about who we are as a people. And who we are, in large part, has to do with a story regarding our enslavement in and redemption from the land of Egypt. Somewhere in Jerusalem, there's a Jew who sits on the ground wearing a colorful skullcap, speaks Arabic, sells teapots, prays three times a day and has never been to New York City. He is our brother. He is our brother by virtue of the fact that together with him, we are equally grateful for the miracle that God rendered in redeeming our ancestors, and thus us, from the land of Egypt. That's the message that ought to be discussed at our seder tables.

WHO IS GOING TO LEAD ALL THIS DISCUSSION?

Another good question. Who is your family's natural discussion leader? There usually is one who enjoys a good debate or discussion. It's time to tap into his/her talents. Hold a family meeting and appoint someone the leader.

IN SUMMARY

- 1) Clean the house;
- 2) Get rid of the hametz;
- 3) Eat matzah on the first two nights;
- 4) Make sure the seder is more than just a meal;
- 5) Make a commitment to do a little more each year.

Remember - this is only the beginner's list, but make sure that you and your Pesach seder grow each year.

Mechirat Chametz

The Selling of Chametz

Jewish law prohibits the use or legal possession of any Chametz, leaven of any kind, on Passover. In order to be certain that all Chametz has been removed from our possession, Jewish tradition requires us to sell our remaining Chametz to a non-Jew. This Chametz, then, becomes the property of the non-Jew for the duration of Passover and should be set aside in a place in one's home that will be unused during Passover.

The authorization of the right to sell Chametz can be granted to another. If you would like Rabbi Kurshan to sell your Chametz on your behalf, please fill out the form below. In order to symbolize that one is transferring the authority to sell, it is customary to make a token monetary transfer. The money contributed will be used to provide needy families with Passover necessities. If you send a check, please make it out to Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, c/o Huntington Jewish Center.

AUTHORIZATION OF PROXY

Whereas according to Jewish Law one is not permitted to maintain or possess Chametz during the Passover holiday, I, the undersigned, hereby authorize Rabbi Kurshan to sell the Chametz whether it be found in my residence or elsewhere. This Chametz that I wish sold includes every kind of leavened food or liquid whether in separate entities, mixed forms, dishes or utensils. I understand that Rabbi Kurshan will sell the Chametz for me to a non-Jew for the entire week of Passover and that I shall derive no use or pleasure from it during that time.

(Name) _____

(Address) _____

(City and State) _____

Please return the Proxy to the Synagogue office by
Monday morning, April 18, 2011 before 8:00 AM

SEDER TIPS

The following tips will help to create a more meaningful Seder.

GIVE HOMEWORK - Have all of your participants prepare something in advance of the Seder which they will contribute at the Seder. Children might prepare a few songs; teenagers their own creative skit about the Exodus such as a take-off on a television show. Adults can be given a topic to prepare in advance such as the role of women in the Exodus or theories about the plagues or the parting of the Red Sea.

STRATEGIC PLANNING - A great Seder does not happen spontaneously. Map out in advance what parts of the Seder you will include or leave out. (There is no requirement to recite every word from the Haggadah.) Where will you follow the Haggadah and where will you allow for creativity? How will you allow for the participation of those at your table? Coordinate your timing with the person in charge of the kitchen so that you are not blamed for burned tzimmes or cold chicken soup. Give attention to how you will conclude the Seder after the meal so that everyone is not asleep right after dessert or ready to go home.

HORS D'OEUVRES - In addition to the traditional dipping of the Karpas (green vegetable) in salt water at the beginning of the Seder, I recommend that you provide a plentiful array of additional vegetables and dips. This will take the edge off of everyone's hunger and is also in keeping with the earliest haggadot which indicate the variety of vegetables that were dipped at the beginning of the Seder.

TELL THE STORY - The main requirement of the Seder is to tell the story of leaving Egypt. Don't limit your imagination. If you are creative, use drama, voices, costumes, or puppets to retell the story. Let the children do a skit or have the adults imagine the night of leaving Egypt and act out their preparations. Don't try to read every word of the Haggadah.

ASK QUESTIONS - Don't limit yourself to the four questions in the Haggadah. One of the best ways to elicit the telling of the story of the Exodus is by asking questions. We have learned a lot and had a lot of good laughs by asking questions such as: What was a typical day during the plague of frogs? If you could only pack three things when you left Egypt, what would you take? What would be the first thing you would say after emerging from the far side of the Red Sea? In a different vein, go round the table and ask people to share one way they feel enslaved or one aspect of their lives in which they would like to feel freer this year. The level of self disclosure is up to each person, but it is a great way to equalize participation around the table.

EAT THE MATZAH IN SILENCE - There is much noise at the Seder table as there should be. Traditionally a Jewish meal is begun by silence between the washing of the hands and the motzi. Invite everyone at the table not to speak from the time the first person washes until the motzi is made. You will focus more intently on the eating of the matzoh and the meal itself might feel more like a religious celebration.

SING - Even if you do not know many songs, the children will know songs from Nursery School or Religious School. Invite a grandparent to share a family melody. Be creative! Have your guests try to sing all the verses of Chad Gadya in one breath or do it with the sound effects of each animal or object which is mentioned. Be prepared that finding the right sounds for God and the Angel of Death is a real challenge.