PASSOVER

INTRODUCTION TO PASSOVER

Introduction to Passover

Introduction to Passover: Passover Names

Passover celebrates the seven or eight days starting with the 14th of *Nisan*, when God took the Israelites out of Egypt about 3300 years ago. The holiday has several names:

- ***Chag HaPesach***--Holiday of "Skipping Over" (reflecting that God passed over the Jewish homes and did not kill the first-born sons, unlike those of the Egyptians);
- ***Chag HaAviv***--Festival of Spring (the Jewish calendar is based on the moon and is adjusted to the solar cycle so that *Passover* always comes in the spring);
- ***Chag HaMatzot***--Holiday of Unleavened Bread; and
- ***Zman Cheiruteinu***--Time of our Freedom.

Introduction to Passover: Passover Observance

Passover observance includes removal of *chametz*, the *Passover* sacrifice and its reminders, and the *Passover seder*:
Chametz

Chametz Gamur and *Ta'arovet Chametz*

The *Five Grains*, once fermented into items such as bread or beer, are genuine *chametz* (*chametz gamur)* and are forbidden on *Passover* by the *Torah* (*d'oraita*). *Ta'arovet chametz* (a mixture containing *chametz*) includes foods such as breakfast cereal and are also forbidden on *Passover*.
Rules for *Chametz*

- You may not own or see (your own) *chametz* during the entire period of *Passover*.
- You may not benefit in any way from *chametz* during *Passover*, whether it belongs to a Jew or to a non-Jew. If the *chametz* was owned by a Jew during *Passover*, you may not benefit from that *chametz* even after the holiday has ended.

What To Do with *Chametz*

Ideally, any *chametz* should be used up before *Passover*, given to a non-Jew, or destroyed. But if the *chametz* has significant value, the custom is to sell that *chametz* to a non-Jew. You do not need to sell *kitniyot*, but you must sell any genuine *chametz* and any mixtures of *chametz* (*ta'arovet chametz*).
Passover and Nullification by 1/60th

During the year, 1/60th or less of an undesired substance is considered to be inconsequential and nullified by the other substances. But on *Passover*, any amount of leaven mixed in food is forbidden.
However, the *chametz* in food acquired before *Passover* can be nullified before *Passover*, but ONLY if:

- It is 1/60th or less of the total volume of food,
- The food is liquid mixed in other liquid, or solid in other solid, AND
- The *chametz*/non-*chametz* elements cannot be easily separated from each other.

Four Steps To Eliminating *Chametz*

There are four means of eliminating *chametz*:

- ***Bedika*: Searching**
  You try to find any *chametz*.
- ***Bitul*: Verbal and Intentional Nullification**
  Since you may have overlooked some *chametz* during *bedika*, declare that any *chametz* in your possession is not important to you and has no value.
- ***Bi'ur: Burning***
  By burning and therefore destroying the *chametz*, we fulfill the *Torah* commandment of "*tashbitu*" (making it cease to exist).
- ***Mechira*: Selling**
  By changing the ownership, we no longer own *chametz* on Passover and we create the opportunity to re-acquire the *chametz* after Passover has ended if the non-Jewish buyer agrees.

Chametz Symbolism

Fermented grains represent (among other things) arrogance and pride: the puffing up of fermented grains is symbolic of people puffing up themselves. In Judaism, one way to get rid of a bad personal trait is to utterly destroy it and so we symbolically remove and destroy any fermented grain foods from our houses and ownership.

Destroying *chametz* is not a violation of "do not destroy" (*bal tashchit*) since it is done to perform a commandment.

What Are *Kitniyot*

Kitniyot are foods that look similar to the five *chametz* grains or that could be ground into a flour that could look like flour from those grains, such as beans, peanuts, rice, corn, mustard seeds, and other food plants that are grown near the *Five Grains*.

What To Do with *Kitniyot*

Kitniyot may not be used on *Passover* but do not need to be sold or removed from one's ownership. *Kitniyot* should be stored away from *kosher* for *Passover* food.

Passover Sacrifice

In *Temple* times, the *Passover* sacrifice was to be eaten with one's family and possibly with neighbors, depending on the number of people present. The only two instances of *kareit* (being cut off spiritually) for not doing a positive commandment are for not doing a *brit mila* and not bringing a *Passover* offering (in *Temple* times).

Seder

The *Passover seder* (order) was prescribed in ancient times as a means for helping all Jews, of all ages and both genders, to re-experience the transition from having been slaves to becoming free and from having ascended from idol worshippers to being monotheistic.

PASSOVER: COOKING AND EATING UTENSILS

Passover: Special Pots

You may not use cooking utensils on *Passover* that have been used for cooking *chametz* during the year unless they have been *kashered*. For details, click kashrus/kk-passover-*kashering*.htm">here.

You do not need to sell the *chametz* that is on the utensils unless it totals more than 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup).

Passover: Kitniyot in Passover Utensil

SITUATION	*Kitniyot* were cooked in a *Passover* utensil.
SITUATION 1	The *kitniyot*'s volume was less than 50% of the volume of food cooked in that utensil.
STATUS	The food may be eaten and the utensil may be used on *Passover* (no need to *kasher*).

SITUATION 2 The *kitniyot's* volume was more than 50% of the volume of the food cooked in that utensil.

STATUS The food is not permitted to be eaten.

SITUATION 2A The *kitniyot's* volume was more than 50% of the volume of the food cooked in that utensil, and the total volume of the food cooked (*kitniyot* + non-*kitniyot*) was less than the normal volume of food which is cooked in that utensil.

STATUS The utensil may be used even without *kashering*, as long as you wait at least 24 hours after the utensil has been cleaned.

SITUATION 2B The *kitniyot's* volume was more than 50% of the volume of the utensil itself and more than 50% of the normal volume of food cooked in it.

STATUS You may not eat the food (until after *Passover*) and must *kasher* the utensil after waiting 24 hours.

NOTE You may only *kasher* a utensil on *chol ha'moed* but NOT on the festival days themselves.

PASSOVER: FOODS AND SOAPS

PASSOVER: FOOD ITEMS

Cumin

Cumin is not used on *Passover* due to its similarity to *kitniyot*. This is a custom.

Flour (raw)

Raw flour is suspected of being *chametz* and therefore may not be owned during *Passover*.

Frozen Vegetables

Frozen vegetables, such as spinach or broccoli, may not be used on *Passover* unless certified as *kosher* for *Passover*.

Matza (Oat)

There is no question that oat *matza* properly made and supervised according to Jewish law is *kosher* for eating on *Passover*.

Matza (Unopened)

Kosher for *Passover* *matza* in unopened packages stays *kosher* for *Passover* and may be used in subsequent years.

Quinoa

Quinoa is not *chametz* because it does not ferment without adding yeast and it is not one of the original *Five Grains*.

Seltzer

Plain seltzer (with no additives other than water and carbon dioxide) that has been produced before *Passover* does not need *kosher* supervision.
If produced during *Passover*, it might need *kosher* supervision.

Water (Plain)

Plain water (in the USA) never needs *kosher* supervision, not even for *Passover*.

Yeast

Yeast is not normally *chametz* but may not be used on *Passover*.

PASSOVER: SOAP/TOILETRIES

Dish Soap

Dish soap made from *kosher* ingredients but without *Passover* supervision may still be a problem on *Passover* due to possible alcoholic ingredients.

Chametz Soap

You may not use (including you may not ingest even tiny amounts of) soap that contains *chametz* on *Passover*. But since it is not fit for a dog to eat, you do not need to sell it.

Toothbrush

You do not need a new toothbrush for *Passover* as long as it is clean.

Toothpaste for Passover

Toothpaste does not need to be specially made *kosher* for *Passover*.

Laundry Starch

You may use non-*chametz* starch on clothing during *Passover* but not on tablecloths, napkins, or other items that might contact food.

REASON The starch might be *kitniyot*.

PASSOVER: HOW TO PREPARE

PASSOVER: GETTING RID OF CHAMETZ

PASSOVER: CLEANING

Passover: Preparing for the Search

Clean the house before searching for *chametz*. Mark off the cleaned areas as you work. (This is just a suggestion, not a requirement!)

Passover: What Chametz To Remove

You must remove significant *chametz* when cleaning for *Passover*. But you do not need to remove small crumbs unless they may be inadvertently eaten during *Passover*--if they are on a kitchen counter, a table, etc.

NOTE It is the custom to remove all *chametz* from the house.

Passover: When You Do Not Need To Clean

You do not need to clean your house if you will:

- Leave your house 30 days or more before *Passover*, and
- Will not return to your house until after *Passover* has ended, and
- Have sold your *chametz* before the holiday begins.

PASSOVER: SEARCHING FOR CHAMETZ (BEDIKAT CHAMETZ)

Passover Chametz Search: Who May Search

One member of each house must search for any *chametz* (*bedikat chametz*) on behalf of the entire household. This may be a *man*, woman, or even a minor child, as long as he or she is sufficiently responsible to conduct the search in all of the details.

Passover Chametz Search: When To Search

Search your house for any leavened food or crumbs the night before first *seder* night. If the first *seder* begins Saturday night, you must search for *chametz* on Thursday night.

Passover Chametz Search: Where To Search

You must look for *chametz* (leavened foods) in any place where food might have been carried. If you have small children, you must search your entire house. However, you do not need to search in any place where no food was brought, nor in any closets that will be locked during *Passover* and the leavened food in them sold.

Passover Chametz Search: Whether To Search

If you are staying in someone else's house for *Passover* and the owner is away for the holiday, you must do *bedikat chametz* for the house--even if the owner has not been there for more than 30 days and even if you will not be eating in that house. The same rule applies for any place that you have rented for any part of *Passover* and that does not have a resident owner who has done the *bedika* there.

EXCEPTION If you are staying in a hotel or other accommodation that is thoroughly cleaned before *Passover*, you do not need to do *bedika chametz*.

Passover Chametz Search: Putting Out Chametz To Find

Before beginning the official *chametz* search, put out 10 pieces of *chametz* wrapped to prevent crumbs from falling off.

NOTE The entire procedure of putting out *chametz* is a non-binding custom.

Passover Chametz Search: Which Blessing To Say

Before searching for *chametz*, say the blessing *al bi'ur chametz*.

Passover Chametz Search: How To Search

While the search for *chametz* is traditionally done by candlelight, you may use a flashlight. You should not use a normal room light.

REASON The idea is to use a directional light source, which will highlight any *chametz*.

PASSOVER: NULLIFYING CHAMETZ

Passover: Nullifying Chametz: Which Language for Kol Chamira

The *kol chamira* formula, in Aramaic, is said to nullify any leaven that was missed during the search. If you do not understand the Aramaic, you should also read the translation in English (or whatever your own language is).

Passover: Nullifying Chametz: Who Says Kol Chamira

Everyone at *bedikat chametz*, including guests who will be there for the holiday, says the *kol chamira* formula for nullifying any *chametz* that they own.

NOTE A similar nullification is said the next morning (morning of the day before *Passover*), when the *chametz* from the search is burned.

PASSOVER: BURNING CHAMETZ

Passover: Burning Chametz: What To Do with Chametz

If you own any *chametz*, you must burn some of it in order to fulfill the commandment of burning *chametz:* this is a *mitzva* from the *Torah*!

NOTE If you have too much *chametz* to conveniently burn, you may throw some of the *chametz* into the garbage (but not into your own garbage can, only a public one--where permitted).
You must throw the *chametz* into the garbage **before** you burn the remainder. You may, alternatively, throw the *chametz* into a public area or pond (if permitted by the owner or by law).

Passover: Burning Chametz: Wife Covered by Husband

At the burning of the *chametz* before *Passover*, a wife is covered by her husband's saying *kol chamira* and burning *chametz*, unless she has *chametz* of her own.

Passover: Burning Chametz: Husband Covered by Wife

It is preferable for a husband to say *kol chamira.* However, he is covered by his wife's saying *kol chamira,* as long as he has asked his wife to do so.

NOTE If the wife burns the *chametz*, she should inform her husband at the time she actually burns the *chametz* (she may inform him by phone and does not have to do so in person).

PASSOVER: SELLING CHAMETZ

Passover: Selling Chametz: Different Countries for You and Your Chametz

If you live in one country and go to another country for *Passover*, you must sell your *chametz* so that the *chametz* in each country is sold and re-acquired at the correct time based on where you are located but also on where your *chametz* is. Consult a *rabbi*.

Passover: Selling Chametz: Selling by Mail

Appointing the *rabbi* (if the *rabbi* agrees!) as an agent to sell your *chametz* does not require an acquisition and may be effected through the mail.

Passover: Selling Chametz: Selling Animals and their Food

You must sell dog (or other animal) food, if it contains any *chametz*, for *Passover* to a non-Jew.

NOTE You may sell your dog (or other animal) to a non-Jew for *Passover* (in order to allow the animal to eat *chametz* on *Passover*), but not to the same person to whom you sold the food.

PASSOVER: ACQUIRING CHAMETZ DURING PASSOVER

Passover: Getting Rid of Chametz: Acquiring Chametz during Passover

If you inadvertantly buy *chametz* on Passover, you must burn it.
If *chametz* was brought to you, such as by mail delivery service, DON'T accept it. Consider it as ownerless/ *hefker*. You may not bring it into your house or yard. If it is still there after Passover has ended, you may take it for yourself.

NOTE If you inadvertantly bought *kitniyot* during Passover, just put it away until Passover has ended and then you may eat it.

PASSOVER: KASHERING

Passover: Dishes and Pots

See Passover: Special Pots.
For more details on *kashering* for *Passover* from the Star-K, click here.

NOTE On *Passover*, gender and *chametz* status DO get transferred through a stream of hot liquid back into the pouring container.

Passover: When To Finish Kashering

When *kashering* an oven or utensils for *Passover*, you may *kasher:*

- By *Libun*

  Anytime, including on *chol ha'moed* (but not on *Jewish festivals* or *Shabbat*).

- By *Hag'ala*

Until one hour before *halachic midday* on *Passover* eve (but *b'di'avad* it is OK until just before sunset of *Passover* eve).

Passover: Kashering Pots and Utensils To Change from Milk to Meat (or vice versa)

You may make certain utensils *kosher* for *Passover* if they were *chametz* or non-*kosher*. For a list of materials that can be *kashered*, see the sections entitled **"Items/Materials that Can Be *Kashered*"** and **"Items/Materials that Cannot Be *Kashered*"** here: Introduction to Food Nullification: Utensils (*Kashering*)
.

NOTE You may not change utensils that are already *kosher* directly from *milk* to meat or meat to *milk*. Rather, you must:

- First make the utensil non-*kosher* (or *chametz*), and then
- *Kasher* it.

Once *kashered*, the utensil will usually be neutral/*pareve* as far as gender and you may choose to make it *dairy* or meat.

Passover: Kashering an Oven

To *kasher* an oven for *Passover*:

- Clean it completely, including any hard deposits, and
- Heat the oven for 40 minutes at its highest temperature.

Passover: Kashering an Oven: Cleaning

To determine whether an oven is clean:
If there are black or brown spots, scratch them:

- If the substance crumbles, the spots are OK.
- If the spots do not crumble, consider the oven NOT clean.

NOTE If you use the oven's self-clean cycle, you do not need to remove the hard deposits from the oven before *kashering*.
If the oven is not self-cleaning, you must remove (clean off or burn off) any deposits on the walls, racks, and window. If the stains or deposits do not come off after two cycles of using a strong oven cleaner such as Easy Off, the oven is considered sufficiently clean. **Weaker oven cleaners that do not remove deposits may not be relied on.**

Passover: Kashering an Oven: Temperature

The order of preference for the heat settings is

- Self-cleaning (if possible) on the self-cleaning cycle.
- Next choice is broil or the highest heat setting.

For more details on *kashering* for *Passover*, see
kashrus/kk-passover-*kashering*.htm">http://www.star-k.org/*kashrus*/kk-passover-*kashering*.htm

PASSOVER EVE: WHAT TO STOP DOING WHEN

PASSOVER EVE: WHEN TO STOP EATING MATZA

When To Stop Eating Matza

You may not eat *matza* after daybreak on the day before the *Passover seder:* about 13 hours before sunset of the first *seder* night.

PASSOVER EVE: WHEN TO STOP EATING/OWNING CHAMETZ/KITNIYOT

When To Stop Eating/Possessing Chametz

After the fourth *halachic hour* on the eve of *Passover:*

- You may not eat *chametz* or *kitniyot*.
- You may not eat non-*chametz* food cooked in a *chametz* utensil.

By the fifth *halachic hour* on the eve of *Passover:*
The *chametz* must be burned.

NOTE A *halachic hour* is a local daytime hour calculated by dividing the total number of daylight hours by 12.

PASSOVER EVE: WHEN TO STOP EXPERT WORK

Expert Work after Noon before Seder Night

You may not do any types of expert or professional work after *halachic midday* before the first *Passover seder*. These types of prohibited work are whatever would be prohibited on *chol ha'moed.*

NOTE You may tell or ask a non-Jew to do such work.

PASSOVER EVE: WHEN TO STOP SHAVING

When To Stop Shaving

You should not shave or get a haircut on the afternoon before *Passover* unless a non-Jew shaves you or cuts your hair.

PASSOVER NIGHT(S)

PASSOVER NIGHT(S): MA'ARIV

Timing of Ma'ariv on Seder Night(s)

- *Ma'ariv* on the first night of *Passover* may begin at sunset. But since the *seder* may not be started until after dark, the custom is to begin *ma'ariv* a little before dark.
- The second *seder* may also not be started until after dark. *Ma'ariv* on the second night of *Passover* may be said from *plag ha'mincha*, 1 1/4 hours before sunset.
- *Ma'ariv* on the seventh and eighth days of *Passover* may be started as early as *plag ha'mincha*, 1 1/4 hours before sunset.

Hallel after Ma'ariv

People who have the custom of saying *hallel* after *ma'ariv* on the first night of *Passover* also say *hallel* on the second night (outside of *Eretz Yisrael*).

HaMapil on Passover

On the first two nights of *Passover*, before going to sleep, just say *shema* and the *ha'mapil* blessing.

REASON The first night (two nights outside of *Eretz Yisrael*) is considered to have special Divine protection, so we omit the extra paragraphs in the final parts of the prayer.

PASSOVER NIGHT(S): EATING MATZA

When Eating Matza Is Obligatory

The only time when *matza* must be eaten to fulfill the commandment of eating *matza* is on *seder* night(s).
There may be a *mitzva* to also eat *matza* on the other days of *Passover* (but there are conflicting opinions about that).
However, men must eat *matza* in order to fulfill the commandment of eating two meals a day on each of the festival days.

PASSOVER: SEDER

SEDER: PRINCIPLES

Seder: Purpose

It is praiseworthy to tell the story of *Passover* even if you know all the details and interpretations (as did the great *rabbis* of the *Talmud*), because of the principle of "in order to remember" (*lema'an tizkor*): that we should remember everything God did for us when taking us out of Egypt.

The Three Discussion Points

The most important part of the *seder* is discussing:

- *Passover* offering (*Pesach*),
- Unleavened bread (*matza)*, and
- Bitter herbs (*maror*).

These three segments should be read from the *Passover hagada* in the *Hebrew*. If anyone does not understand the *Hebrew*, these paragraphs and the concepts they express must be explained in whatever language he or she can understand.

Children at the *Seder*

Children are an integral part of the *seder*. We try to get children to ask questions and then we teach them the answers. The *Torah* says to do this!

Acknowledging God's Miracles

We acknowledge God's miracles in sending the plagues against the Egyptians and their gods and in taking the Children of Israel out of slavery and Egypt.

Telling Our History

We tell our history beginning with Jacob (*Yaakov*) and Laban (*Lavan*) and on to slavery and, finally, to achieving freedom.

SEDER: PRACTICES

SEDER: PRACTICES: HALACHOT

Leaning to the Left

Every male (13 years old and above) at the *seder* is required by *halacha* to lean to the left side while:

- Drinking each of the four cups of wine.
- Eating *matza* for each of these *mitzvot: motzi*, *matza*, *koreich*, *afikoman*.

Ideally, lean onto something to your left, such as a chair or couch. A pillow is nice but optional.

NOTE Women and girls are not required to lean at any time during the meal.

SEDER: PRACTICES: CUSTOMS

Seder Customs

Here are some *seder* customs:

1. Have someone else pour the water over your hands for washing before *karpas*.
2. Have someone else pour your wine for you.

SEDER PLATE

Five Foods of the Seder Plate

Seder plate consists of five foods:

Shank Bone

Shank bone, meat, or a neck represents the *Passover* lamb offering.

NOTE Any part of any *kosher* animal or bird may be used for this purpose except liver. You may even use roasted lamb, but you may not eat it.

Egg

Egg represents the holiday offering (*chagiga*).

Bitter Herbs

Bitter herbs (*maror*), such as romaine, horseradish, or endive, represent the bitterness of slavery.

Charoset

Charoset (sweet mixture of nuts and fruits) reminds us of the mortar the Jews used to build the Egyptian storage cities.

Vegetable

Vegetable such as parsley or potato (*karpas*). The vegetable does not represent anything and is there to motivate the children to ask questions.

SEDER: THREE MATZAS

Introduction to Three Matzas (Matzot)

The *seder* table also has a stack of three matzas (*matzot*), representing, among other meanings:

- *Cohen-Levi-Yisrael*: The three divisions of Jews
- *Abraham-Isaac-Jacob*: The three forefathers

These *matzot* are used later in the *seder* for the steps of *Motzi* and *Matza* (top and middle *matzas*); the middle *matza* becomes the "*Afikoman*."

SEDER: STEPS

The 15 Steps in the Seder

Kadeish
U'rchatz
Karpas
Yachatz
Magid
Rachtza
Motzi
Matza
Maror
Koreich

Shulchan Oreich
Tzafun
Bareich
Hallel
Nirtza

KADEISH: FOUR CUPS OF WINE

KADEISH: MAKING KIDDUSH

Passover Kiddush

Passover, like all *Jewish festivals*, is differentiated from weekdays by saying *kiddush*.

Everyone Must Drink at Seder

At the *Passover seder*, all Jews above the age of *bar mitzva* or *bat mitzva* (including women--unlike on other *Jewish festivals*) must drink wine for *kiddush* and for the other three times in the *seder* when the *borei pri ha'gafen* blessing is said.

NOTE On the other *Jewish festivals*, only one person needs to drink the wine when *kiddush* is said, and that will cover and fulfill everyone else's requirement for that *kiddush*.

NOTE Only children and people who will get sick if they drink alcohol are permitted to drink grape juice at *seder*.

Alcohol Content of Seder Wine

You may dilute the *seder* wine to a minimum of 4\% alcohol.

Red Wine or White for Seder

If you have equally good red wine and white wine, the red is preferred for the four cups at the *seder*. If your white wine is better or if you prefer white wine, use that.

Drinking More

You may drink more wine between the first and second cups, between the second and third cups, but not between the third and fourth cups.

KADEISH: FOUR CUPS, FOUR ROLES

Four Cups, Four Roles

Each of the four cups has a different role:

- First Cup: *Kiddush* to sanctify the holiday.
- Second Cup: Sanctifying the *hagada*.
- Third Cup: Sanctifying *Birkat ha'mazon*.
- Fourth Cup: Sanctifying *Hallel*.

KADEISH: FOUR CUPS, FOUR EXPRESSIONS

Four Cups, Four Expressions

The four cups of wine relate to the four expressions God used when telling what he would do to bring the Israelites out of Egypt:

- ***V'hotzeiti*** I will send them out.
- ***V'hitzalti*** I will save them.

- ***V'ga'alti*** I will redeem them.
- ***V'lakachti*** I will take them.

KADEISH: FIFTH CUP

Fifth Cup

The fifth cup of wine at *seder*, for *Eliyahu* (*Elijah*) the prophet, symbolizes *v'heiveiti*--"I will bring them."

REASON In the future, everyone will drink five cups of *seder* wine. (Some say the term *v'heiveiti* is not part of the redemption and some say it is a stage that has not happened yet.)
The cup of *Eliyahu* (which is not intended to be drunk by *Eliyahu*) should be used for *kiddush* the next morning. Various customs dictate when to fill *Eliyahu's* cup; it may be filled anytime from the beginning of the *seder*.

KADEISH: HOW MUCH TO FILL AND DRINK

Four Cups: Minimum Quantity To Fulfill Mitzva

Minimum wine to fulfill the *seder mitzva*:

- Each person must drink four cups of wine at the *seder*;
- Each cup must hold at least 4 fl. oz. (119 ml);
- For each blessing on the wine, you must drink at least 2 fl. oz. (59 ml) within 30 seconds of when you begin to drink each cup.

Majority of the Cup/Rov Kos

The *seder* is the only time in the year that you must drink most of your cup *(rov kos)* of *kiddush* wine. (For *kiddush* on *Shabbat* and *Jewish festivals*, you need drink only 2 fl. oz., or 59 ml). So if you have a cup larger than 4 fl. oz. (119 ml), you may have to drink a lot of wine--more than half of each cup for four cups!

NOTE You may drink other liquids between the first and second cups of wine at the *seder*, but it is not recommended.

KADEISH: LEANING TO LEFT

Leaning To Left while Drinking Four Cups

Every male at the *seder* is required to lean to the left side while drinking each cup of wine.

U'RCHATZ: WASH HANDS (NO BLESSING)

U'rchatz (No blessing)

Wash hands from a cup of water but do not say a blessing on washing.

REASON We are about to eat food that is wet and Jews may not eat wet food if their hands have spiritual impurity (*tum'a*).

KARPAS: EAT THE VEGETABLE

Karpas Blessing

Dip the *karpas* in the salt water and say the blessing *borei pri ha'adama;* keep in mind that this blessing will also apply to the bitter herbs you will eat later in the *seder*.

How Much Karpas To Eat

Eating any amount of *karpas* fulfills the *mitzva* of eating *karpas* at *seder*, but you may not eat more than 0.6 fl. oz. (17 ml, or 1/12 cup).

YACHATZ: BREAK THE MATZA

Breaking the Middle Matza

Break the middle of the three *matzas* and hide the larger part.

REASON As with most of the actions we do at the *seder*, this is to evoke curiosity in children. It also represents the idea that poor people can't afford a whole loaf of bread or might save some food for the next day.

MAGID: TELL THE STORY

Four Questions

The Four Questions are actually only one question and that question is:

Why is this night different from all other nights?

Seder in Bnei Brak

The teachers in *Bnai Brak* were so engrossed in telling the *Passover* story that they did not notice that it was after sunrise.

REASON They may have been in a windowless room since they were risking their lives by celebrating *Passover*, against Roman law.

Like 70 Years Old

Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya says he is “like 70 years old” because even though he was only 18 years old, his hair turned white overnight as if God approved his appointment as *Sanhedrin* head.

Four Sons

Only three of the Four Sons' questions are mentioned in the *Torah* (which all related to the *Passover* sacrifice), since the fourth (smallest) child cannot ask questions. Regarding this child, the *hagada* says, "Aht p'tach lo" (in the feminine).

REASON The mother is supposed to be a child's primary teacher while the child is young.

There is a difference in attitude between the wise son and the evil son: The wise son says "Eloheinu" (OUR God); he is asking a question and seeking and answer. The evil son makes a statement (sort of a rhetorical question), instead of asking a question for which he seeks an answer.
Why is there a “wise” (chacham) son and not a “righteous” (*tzadik*) son, which would be the logical counterpart to the “evil” (rasha) son?
We don't know who is a *tzadik*. We cannot be sure by external appearance or even by seeing certain behaviors. We can tell who is a chacham by hearing him speak or by discussing *Torah* with him.
Yet, regardless of the sons' level of observance, it is a commandment to teach them about going out of Egypt.

Calculating the End (of Slavery)

God told *Avraham* (*Abraham*) that his children would be living in “lands not their own” and would be enslaved for 400 years, Yet the *Torah* states that the Israelites were in Egypt for 210 years. So we say God “calculated the end” (*chisheiv et ha'keitz*) of the enslavement: He started the counting from the birth of *Avraham's* son, *Yitzchak* (Isaac), until the *Exodus* (a total of 400 years), as follows:

Time from Birth of *Avraham's* Son to Going Down to Egypt

- *Yaakov* (Jacob) was born when *Yitzchak* was 60 years old.
- *Yaakov* told *Par'o* (Pharoah) (when he and the rest of his family entered Egypt) that he was 130 years old.
- 60 + 130= **190 years before going down to Egypt**

Time in Egypt

210 years in Egypt

Time from Birth of *Avraham's* Son to *Exodus*

190 Before going down to Egypt
+ 210 In Egypt
= 400 years from *Yitzchak's* birth to the *Exodus*.

NOTE *Yitzchak* and *Yaakov* did not yet "own" *Eretz Yisrael*. Since the Israelites were not given *Eretz Yisrael* until after the *Exodus*, *Avraham's* offspring were living in "lands not their own" for 400 years.

V'Hi She'Amda and Lefichach

When we lift up our wine cups at *v'hi she'amda* and at *lefichach*, we cover the *matza*.

REASON So the *matza* won't feel "embarrassed," since bread/*matza* is more important than wine.

Let Us Deal Cleverly (Hava Nitchakma)

Hava nitchakma (let us deal cleverly) was an attempt at a clever way to keep the Israelites as slaves.

REASON The Egyptians were afraid the Israelites might join the Egyptians' enemies in a war.

Ten Plagues

Each of the plagues was against one of the Egyptian gods, to show that they were actually powerless.

Spilling Drops of Wine

We spill 10 drops of wine when reading the list of plagues.

REASON Wine symbolizes happiness and so we drink less wine to show that we are sad that the Egyptians suffered.

D'Tzach-Adash-B'Achav

In "the plague of the first-borns" (*makat bechorot*), did the first-borns suffer by dying or did their families suffer more?
In *Rabbi Yehuda's* abbreviations of the ten plagues, *d'tzach-adash-b'achav*, the abbreviation ends with the *Hebrew* letter "vet" for *bechorot* (first-borns), implying that it was the families who suffered, since if it ended with a "mem" for *makat bechorot*, it would have been the first-borns who suffered.

Dayenu

In *dayenu*, we say that at each level of what God did for us, it would have been enough. Since we didn't get the *Torah* until one of the last stages, this seems incorrect, since of what value is money, wandering in the desert, and all of the other details if we don't have the *Torah*?
The answer is that we need to be grateful to God for each miracle that we received, and that at each stage, we owe praise and thanks to God.
Also, in one sense, we already had the *Torah* (in some version, even though not in the form in which Moses/Moshe wrote it later).

Pesach, Matza, and Maror

Pesach, *matza*, and *maror* should be read and explained with special attention.

REASON They are the main parts of the *seder* and of the commandment to have a *seder*.

In Every Generation

The *hagada* tells us that in every generation, a person must see himself as if he had personally gone out of Egypt. If so, why didn't our Sages suggest how to visualize or recreate the experience?

It is not possible to actually see ourselves as having left slavery. Rather, we should feel our obligation to do the *mitzvot* (commandments) as the Israelites felt when they left Egypt, as they switched from being slaves to serving *Hashem*. We can be freed (*b'nei chorin*) from physical or spiritual slavery.

Why Matza and Not Bread

Question: Why didn't the Israelites bake bread (the *Torah* says that they did not have time for the dough to rise)? They knew 14 days ahead of time (on *Rosh Chodesh Nisan*) that they would be leaving, and they knew it would be middle of night (since God said that is when they would leave).
Answer: The Israelites did not do anything to prepare, except what God told them to do: the *Passover offering* and putting blood on their doorposts.

RACHTZA: WASH HANDS (WITH A BLESSING)

How To Wash Your Hands for Rachtza

To wash hands for *rachtza*:

- Fill the washing cup with at least 3.3 fl. oz. (99 ml) of water.
- Pour enough water (may be as little as 1.3 fl. oz.--39 ml, or 1/6 cup) from the washing cup to completely cover your entire first hand (either hand may be first, but it is the custom to wash your right hand first).
- Pour enough water to completely cover the second hand.

You do not need to pour more than once per hand and you do not need to break up the revi'it into more than one pour for each hand.

Handwashing Blessing

Say the blessing on washing hands, ending in *al netilat yadayim*.

MOTZI MATZA: BLESS ON/EAT MATZA

MATZA: WHY

Matza: Meaning

Matza represents:

- Food of poor people, and
- The unleavened bread that the Israelites ate when leaving Egypt.

NOTE A pun reflects this dual meaning of poor bread plus the story of leaving Egypt, since "*lechem oni*" may mean "bread of poor people" or "bread of (many) answers."

MATZA: WHAT KIND

When Shmura Matza Is Necessary

The only time you must use *shmura matza* is for the four commandments of *motzi*, *matza*, *koreich*, *and afikoman*.

NOTE You may use any other *kosher* for *Passover matza*, even for the rest of *seder*. There is no need for using *shmura matza* for the other days of *Passover*.

Hand Shmura Matza or Machine Shmura Matza

Hand *shmura matza* has some advantage in that it was made with the intention of being for a *mitzva*, but machine *shmura matza* has the advantage of being less likely to become *chametz* since it is automated and not touched by human hands.

MATZA: HOW MUCH

How Much Matza To Eat

Motzi, Matza

For *motzi* and *matza* together, you must eat at least 1.9 fl. oz. (56 ml) of *matza* within a 4-minute period from when you begin eating.

Afikoman

For *afikoman*, you must eat another 1.9 fl. oz of *matza*; *b'di'avad*, at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) is sufficient.

NOTE This amount is about 1/2 of a machine *shmura matza*, or 1/3 of a hand *shmura matza*.

NOTE If your mouth is too dry to eat that quickly, you may drink water with the *matza*.

MOTZI/MATZA: BLESSINGS

Why Two Blessings over Matza

We say two blessings over the *matza*: *ha'motzi lechem min ha'aretz* and *al achilat matza.*

REASON The blessing on *motzi* is one of enjoyment (*nehenin*); the blessing on *matza* is a blessing on a commandment (*mitzva*).

How To Do Motzi and Matza

The *seder* leader says the blessing "*ha'motzi*" while holding the three (which are now 2 1/2) *shmura* matzas, drops the bottom one, and says the next blessing, *al achilat matza*. Everyone takes a small piece from the two top matzas and eats it, along with enough additional *shmura matza* to fulfill the minimum requirement.

MAROR: EAT BITTER VEGETABLE

Maror: What To Eat

The ideal bitter vegetable for *maror* at the *Passover seder* is horseradish. Horseradish for *maror:*

- Must be fresh enough to be sharp.
- Should be ground (if ground ahead of time, it must be stored in a covered container until the *seder*).
- Must not have liquid (horseradish with beets added is not suitable for use as *maror)*.

NOTE Many people have the custom to use romaine lettuce for *maror* (be careful to check for bugs on the romaine).

Maror: How Much To Eat

The minimum amount to fulfill the *mitzva* of eating *maror* at *seder* is 0.65 fl. oz. (19 ml), or about the volume of 1/3 of an egg.

NOTE If you choose to use romaine instead of horseradish for *maror*, the minimum amount is about 2-3 stems (depending on their size), or enough leaves if crushed to make up 0.65 fl. oz.

NOTE It is even better to eat at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup).

Maror: How To Eat It

Say the blessing "*al achilat maror*."
Dip the *maror* into the *charoset* and shake off all but a little bit of the *charoset*.
Do not lean when eating the *maror*.

NOTE The blessing for *maror* was included in the *borei pri ha'adama* blessing, which was said on the *karpas* earlier in the *seder*.

KOREICH: EAT THE SANDWICH

Koreich: How Much Matza To Eat

You need eat only 0.95 fl. oz. (28 ml) of *matza* within four minutes of beginning to eat it to fulfill the commandment of *koreich*.

Koreich: How Much Maror To Eat

For *koreich*, use the same amount of *maror* as for the *maror* commandment. See *Maror*: How Much To Eat.

How To Eat Koreich

To eat the *koreich:*

- Put some bitter herbs on the *matza*.
- Lean to the left when eating the *koreich*.

SHULCHAN OREICH: EAT THE FESTIVAL MEAL

Lamb and Other Meat at Seder

Don't eat roasted meat of any kind at the *seder*, including roasted poultry.

REASON So it will not be confused with the *Passover* offering.
NOTE You may eat lamb as long as it is not roasted.

What Constitutes Non-Roasted Meat at Seder?

Meat is not considered to be roasted if, when the baking began, there was at least 1/4" of liquid in the cooking utensil with the meat.

TZAFUN: HIDDEN (AFIKOMAN)

When To Finish Afikoman

You should ideally finish *afikoman* by midnight at the *Passover seder*, but you may eat it later than midnight if you have not finished (or even started!) your meal by then.

Eating or Drinking after Afikoman

After eating the *afikoman* on *Passover*, you may not eat again until daybreak, but you will still drink two more cups of wine and you may drink water anytime through the night.

BAREICH: SAY BIRKAT HAMAZON

Forgetting Afikoman

If you said *birkat ha'mazon* at the *seder* but had forgotten to eat the *afikoman*, you must:

- Wash your hands,
- Say *ha'motzi*,
- Eat at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) of *matza*,
- Say *birkat ha'mazon* again, and then
- Drink the third cup of wine.

OPENING THE DOOR/ SH'FOCH CHAMATCHA

Sh'foch Chamatcha

Open the door at this point.

REASON To show our trust in God to protect us, since the first night of *Passover* is called a night of watching (*leil shimurim*), when God provides special protection for the Jewish people.

NOTE You should open the door unless you are in an unsafe neighborhood. If the neighborhood is dangerous, it may be forbidden by Jewish law to live there at any time.

HALLEL: SAYING HALLEL PSALMS

Hallel Divided at Seder

At the *seder*, *hallel* is divided into two parts. The first two *psalms*, read before the meal, deal with the *exodus* from Egypt. The remaining *psalms*, read after the meal, concern other miracles and the future of the Jewish nation.

Hallel at Night at Passover Seder

There are many opinions as to why we read *hallel* at night: most are related either to praising God for saving the Jewish people or to accompanying the *Passover* sacrifice in the *Temple* in Jerusalem.

NIRTZA: ACCEPTED

Acceptance of Seder and Commandments

We hope that God accepts our *seder* and all of the commandments that we have done on this night.

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