

# Your Passover Guide



*"In every generation a person is obligated to regard himself as if he had come out of Egypt."*

—Passover Haggadah

## Introduction

Passover: the Festival of Freedom. The holiday commemorating our ancient ancestors' supernatural escape from the Egyptian Empire.

But Passover is more than a Biblical legend or historical anecdote—it's a celebration brimming with personal meaning, spiritual symbolism and rich, enduring moral lessons. Read on, and discover a new and relevant side of Passover.

*Text and images provided courtesy of the Farbrengen magazine*

## Before You Passover

### *Before Passover*

Any and all leavened items that is, foods or products containing wheat, barley, oats, rye, spelt or their derivatives—are chametz: Passover-prohibited. So a few weeks before Passover, begin cleaning your entire home and business—every room, nook and cranny where food may have been brought. Search for any chametz products and isolate them in a designated "chametz closet." Empty your clothes pockets, throw out vacuum cleaner bags and sweep every floor totally crumb free. Check ingredients in everything—even pet food is potential chametz. You'll be using a separate set of dishes for Passover, so put your year-round dishes in that chametz closet. And stock up on kosher-for-Passover items! For good leads on what's Passover-kosher, call Chabad or check out [www.ok.org](http://www.ok.org).



## *Search for Chametz*

Conduct the formal search of your house for chametz on the night before Passover, after nightfall\*. We traditionally use a candle, wooden spoon and feather: with all lights out, the candle lights the way; any chametz found is swept by the feather onto the wooden spoon and dumped into a paper bag. Begin searching with this blessing:

*Boruch Atoh Ado-noi Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam Asher Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sov Vi-tzi-vanu Al Bi-ur Chametz.*

After searching, put the bag-containing the feather and spoon-in a place you won't overlook, and recite this disclaimer:

*All leaven or anything leavened which is in my possession, which I have neither seen nor removed, and about which I am unaware, shall be considered naught and ownerless as the dust of the earth.*



## *Burning of the Chametz*

The morning\* after your chametz search, retrieve the bag, take it outside, put it on your grill and light up. However you destroy your chametz, recite this annulment as you do:

*All leaven or anything leavened which is in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have observed it or not, whether I have removed it or not, shall be considered naught and ownerless as the dust of the earth*

## *Fast of the Firstborn*

When G-d slew the firstborn of Egypt, He spared the firstborn sons of Israel. Out of gratitude all firstborn sons fast on this day. To avoid fasting, simply participate in a siyum, the formal completion of a Talmudic tractate, the morning of the fast—the intellectual achievement and ensuing celebration are cause enough to void the fast.



\*See precise dates/times on enclosed calendar



# Seder Time

## *The Seder Tools*

The Seder table contains an eclectic mix of items each alluding to myriads of mystical meanings. The Seder's revelations unfold in the same order as the events which led to redemption. In fact, the very word Seder means order.



## *The Three Matzot*

The bread of Faith. Our ancestors displayed the deepest levels of faith when they followed G-d into the desert with such haste that there wasn't even time for the bread they had baked to rise. The three Matzot represent the entire Jewish people- Cohen, Levi and Israel. In keeping with Passover's leaven prohibition, use Shmurah (isolated) Matzah. Shmurah Matzah flour is carefully isolated from any contact with water from harvest through grinding and kneading at controlled facilities, making it kosher for Passover.

## *The Seder Plate*

**ZEROAH (Shankbone)** The Pascal Lamb is represented by the Zeroah. Mystical tradition replaces the shankbone with a chicken neck that is not eaten, as a reminder that although we approach freedom during the Seder, our ultimate freedom is soon to come with the final redemption.

**BETZAH (Egg)** The egg symbolizes the Festival Offering made on Passover in the ancient Holy Temple.

**MAROR (Bitter Herbs/Horseradish)** The bitterness of Egypt is brought to the table with Maror.

**KARPAS (Vegetable)** Egypt crushed our ancestors' spirits with endless, senseless, back-breaking drudgery. A raw vegetable, usually an onion, parsley or potato, is dipped in saltwater and eaten so we may taste their anguish-and in it realize the potential to rise above our own.



CHAROSET (fruit nut paste) As slaves we used mortar - symbolized by Charoset - to make bricks that formed structures which were erected only to be destroyed.



### CHAZERET

(Romaine Lettuce) The initial stages of exile were pleasant, yet soon the injustices of slavery became overwhelming.

So too is the first taste of Chazeret mild, but soon its bitter root becomes dominant.



## *The Four Cups of Wine.*

The cups represent the four progressive stages towards freedom.

First Cup—Physical removal from the Land of Egypt ("I will release you");

Second Cup—Liberation from intellectual and spiritual slavery ("I will save you");

Third Cup—Creation of a people forever immune to permanent slavery ("I will liberate you");

Fourth Cup—G-d's acceptance as His chosen people and the granting of the Torah at Sinai. ("I will take you onto me as a nation").

A Fifth special Cup of wine, the Cup of Elijah, is filled after the Seder's Grace (Step 13). The soul of the spiritually immortal Elijah the Prophet visits every Jewish home on Seder night, and this one's symbolically for him.

## *The Four Sons*

Four sons, four perceptions, forever found in us. The Wise Son, brilliant, yet still asking the same questions each year. The Wicked Son's cynicism is driven by his need to fit things into his down-to-earth world. Knowing the price for everything, he values nothing. Out there in a world of silent amazement, the Simple Son is a transparent channel for the Infinite. If only he could tell us about it. The Son Who Doesn't Know How to Question probably thinks he is the wise son. When you know it all, there's nothing left to ask. And in modern times, the most important son has appeared: the Fifth Son. While the classic Four are at the Seder table each year, the Fifth Son has yet to experience the freedom of Passover.



# Your 15-Step "Soulful Seder" Companion

The first step of the Seder is to forget the noise and stresses of the world and leave it all behind. Tonight we enter a timeless space, where we experience the Exodus together with Moses and all our ancestors.



1  
kadesh

## *A toast to freedom*

Fill your cup with wine (or grape juice). That's the first of four cups you'll enjoy at tonight's Seder. Make sure it holds at least 3-1/2 ounces. Everyone stands and recites Kiddush together. Now get ready for some serious relaxing- remember to recline to your left side while you drink.



2  
urchatz

## *Washing hands*

Fill a cup with water. Pour some water over your right hand three times, then over your left hand three times. (When we wash our hands again before eating matzah, we'll recite a blessing. But not now.)



3  
karpas

## *The appetizer*

We now dip a vegetable (potato, onion or parsley) into saltwater. Say the blessing for eating vegetables, and munch good; you're not going to eat for a while. The saltwater represents the tears of our people, beginning with our slavery in Egypt. We taste harshness again in order to give us the humility necessary for freedom.



4  
yachatz

## *Breaking the matzah*

Take the middle matzah from your Seder Plate and break it into two. Put the smaller piece back between the two complete matzahs. This piece is the "poor man's bread" over which we will recount the story of our Exodus. The larger piece becomes the Afikoman (see step 12); put it in a bag and set aside until the Seder's end.



maggid

5

### *Retelling*

The Seder Plate is moved aside and the second cup of wine is filled. The story of our Exodus is now retold. Children ask the Four Questions, found in the Haggadah. No children at your Seder? Have an adult ask. Alone? You be the child and G-d, the Father.

The Exodus from Egypt was much more than just an historical event. Rather it is a dynamic process that occurs daily as we emancipate ourselves from our own limitations and strive to grasp the divine. To retell the story is to express our essential self; to come face to face with who we really are.

At the end of this reading, say the blessing over the second cup.



rachtzah

6

### *Washing hands*

We now prepare ourselves to eat matzah by again washing our hands. Pour some water over your right hand three times, then over your left hand three times. Say the appropriate blessing and dry your hands.



motzie

### *Thanking G-d for bread*

Raise the three matzahs together-the top one, the broken middle one and the bottom one-and say the blessing "...Who brings forth bread out of the earth." Then return the bottom matzah to the Seder Plate.



matzah

8

### *Bless the matzah*

Recite the blessing on the top and (broken) middle matzah: "... Who commanded us concerning eating matzah."

Break off a piece from each of these two matzahs for yourself and for each of those sitting at your table. Everyone eats at least two ounces (about two thirds of a matzah). Lean to the left while you munch.



maror

9

### *Bitter herbs*

Maror is the bitter taste of our slavery in Egypt. Dip bitter herbs (horseradish, romaine lettuce or both) in charoset, which recalls the mortar of our enslavement, and then shake off the charoset. Say the blessing: "...Who commanded us concerning eating bitter herbs." this time we don't recline



korech

10

*Sandwich*

Take two pieces of matzah, totaling at least an ounce (using the bottom matzah). Take an ounce of maror, dip it in charoset, then shake off the charoset. Place the maror between the matzah pieces and say: "So did Hillel in the time of the Holy Temple ..." Lean to the left while eating.



shulchan orech

11

*Festive meal*

It is the custom of some to begin the meal with eating the egg on the Seder Plate, dipped in saltwater. The egg symbolizes the cycle of life and is also a sign of mourning. At every festive occasion, we mourn the destruction of Jerusalem. Now you can eat.



tzafun

12

*Out of hiding*

At the conclusion of the Passover meal, the Afikoman (which had been set aside) is returned. Everyone eats two-thirds of a matzah, after which nothing else is consumed tonight, except for the two remaining cups of wine.



bairach

13

*Grace after meal*

The third cup is now filled. We say the grace after the meal and then the appropriate blessing for wine, drink this cup while leaning to your left. Now fill a special cup of wine, the Cup of Elijah, and set it in the middle of the table. Open the front door of your home to welcome Elijah and recite the prayer, "Pour out Your wrath ..."



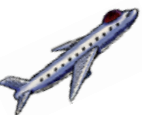
hallel

14

*Praise*

"Songs of Praise" are now offered. Sing them to your heart's content. At the end, say a blessing and drink the fourth and final cup while leaning to the left.





nirtzah

15

### *Acceptance*

The steps of the Seder have been integrated into our consciousness and accepted. Now we pause, take a deep breath, and reflect on our experience: We examined our personal challenges through the slavery of our ancestors, and we achieved a personal freedom by reliving the Exodus. We completed our part in good faith; the rest is up to you-know-Who.

The last song of the Seder echoes our hope and that of our ancestors that G-d heals our broken world, and that His promise for a world of peace and wisdom become a reality. "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor study war anymore," and the entire world will dwell "in a city built where all are united as one."

### *Next Year In Jerusalem!!*

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi did not include the passage "The order of Pesach is concluded" in his Haggadah, for indeed, the Seder never concludes. Its message endures throughout the year. A Jew leaves Egypt every day by transcending his limitations, reaching ever-higher levels of holiness.

Just So You Know



### *Get Counted!*

On the second night we begin to count the Omer, which lasts for 49 days. In the Holy Temple the Omer was a barley offering taken from the first grain of the new crop. We count seven weeks, from the bringing of the first Omer offering (Passover) until the day we received the Torah (the Festival of Shavuot). These 49 days represent the 49 steps of mystical self-purification and preparation our people achieved between leaving Egypt (Passover) and receiving the Torah (Shavuot).

### *Four Intermediates Only*

Between the first two and last two days of Passover, go ahead and function relatively normally. However you shouldn't work too hard. Keep the wine flowing; it's a custom to drink a glass of wine every day of Passover. And don't forget the matzah! It's what Passover is all about.





## *And On The Seventh Day*

We stay up all night studying Torah to commemorate the Miracle of the Splitting of the Sea and our total liberation from Egypt

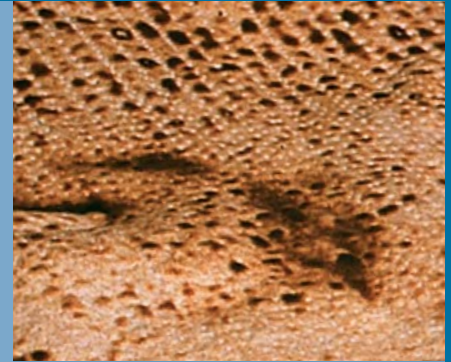


## *The Finals*

The final day of Passover, emphasizes an even higher level of freedom and is dedicated to our imminent and Final Redemption.

## *Last But Not Least*

Yizkor memorial prayers are recited during services. Following the custom of the Ba'al Shem Tov, Passover concludes with a "Feast of Moshiach"-a festive meal complete with Matza and four cups of wine. It begins before sunset and is designed to greet Moshiach. Nightfall marks the official conclusion of Passover.



## *P:2 (The Sequel)*

The "Second Passover," is observed simply by eating a piece of matzah. When the Jews fled Egypt, some of them were unable to participate in the Paschal offering because they were ritually impure. They prayed to G-d for a second chance. G-d agreed, allowing them to enjoy a "Second Passover."



## Delegation Of Power For Sale Of Chametz

Since it is even prohibited to "own" Chametz during Passover, it is customary to secure your "Chametz" in a designated space and sell its contents to a non-Jew. Fill-out this "Mechirat Chometz" form and simply fax it to (123) 456-7890 (all forms must be received by April 4, 2004 5:00 p.m.).

I, \_\_\_\_\_ fully empower  
and permit Rabbi \_\_\_\_\_ to  
act on my behalf to sell all Chametz/mixtures of Chametz owned by me, as  
defined by the Torah and Rabbinic Law, particularly at the address/es listed  
below, and elsewhere. This power is in conformity with all Torah, Rabbinic  
and Civil laws.

Residence Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_ Suite \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday, April 4	Formal search for Chametz	After nightfall
Monday, April 5	Stop eating Chametz Burn Chametz Light Passover candles Say Blessings 1 & 2	Before 10:30 am Before 11:30 am At 6:30 pm
Tuesday, April 6*	Light Passover candles* Say Blessings 1 & 2	After 7:30pm
Friday, April 9**	Light Shabbat candles Say Blessing 3	At 6:35 pm
Shabbat, April 10	Shabbat ends	At 7:30 pm
Sunday, April 11	Light Passover candles Say Blessing 1	At 6:40 pm
Monday, April 12*	Light Passover candles* Say Blessing 1	After 7:40 pm
Tuesday, April 13	Yizkor Passover ends	At 10:30 am At 7:40 pm
Wednesday, May	5 P2 – Pesach Sheni	

\* Light only from a pre-existing flame. \*\* Do not light after time indicated.

## Blessings

*Boruch Atoh Ado-noi Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam Asher Ki-de-sha-nu Be-  
mitz-vo-sov Vi-tzi-vanu Le-had-lik Ner Shel Yom Tov.*

*Boruch Atoh Ado-noi Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam She-heh-che-yoh-nu Vi-  
kiye-mo-nu Ve-he-ge-ah-nu Liz-man Ha-zeh.*

*Boruch Atoh Ado-noi Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam Asher Ki-de-sha-nu Be-  
mitz-vo-sov Vi-tzi-vanu Le-had-lik Ner Shel Shabbat Kodesh.*

Join Chabad of Sanfransisico for an enchanting

# Passover Seder

*Enjoy an in-depth Hebrew/English Passover experience, with plenty of translation and an abundance of commentary.*



**First Seder Night:**

**Monday April 5th at 7:30 pm**

*Explore the Kabalistic insight on the number four: Four cups of wine, four suns, four questions and four types of freedom*

**Second Seder Night:**

**Tuesday April 6th at 7:30 pm**

*Explore the Kabalistic insight on the number four: Four cups of wine, four suns, four questions and four types of freedom*

**Suggested donation: Adults \$36 - Child \$10**

For more information and reservation please call Chabad at: 987-654-3210

**E-mail: [Chabad@chabad.com](mailto:Chabad@chabad.com) Please RSVP by April 1st**

MACHON MENACHEM  
Chabad of the Valley  
18181 Burbank Boulevard  
Tarzana, California 91356

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