

Preparing for Pesach 5770 – A Practical Guide

Shabbos Hagadol. It is a long-standing tradition in all Jewish communities for the Rabbi to present a special Drasha for the community on the Shabbat prior to Pesach, March 27, Shabbat Hagadol. This year, I will present a Drasha before Mincha, designed for men and women, and a Pesach FAQs and Q & A following Shalosh Seudot.

Maot Chittim: To help Jews in need, and to facilitate their proper Pesach observance and joyous celebration, locally, nationally, in Israel, and around the world, we collect and distribute funds through the Shul for Maot Chittim. A public appeal was held at YIJE for this purpose on February 20. Whether or not you pledged, checks can be made out to YIJE and sent to Rabbi Hochberg's attention for immediate distribution.

Proper Disposal of Chometz - 3 Steps:

Every Jew is obligated to celebrate the entire holiday of Passover without owning, or benefiting from, chametz, which includes all non-Pesach products derived from “the 5 grains” (wheat, rye, barley, oats and spelt.) There are four procedures, designed to ensure that we own no Chametz On Pesach:

1. *Mechirat chametz* (sale of *chametz* to a non-Jew)
2. *Bedikat chametz* (the search for *chametz*)
3. *Bitul chametz* (the nullification of *chametz*)
4. *Biur chametz* (destruction of *chametz*)

1. Mechirat Chametz One who cannot dispose of all of his chametz before Passover **authorizes** his Rabbi, in advance, to sell his/her chametz for him/her to a non-Jew. This transaction is completely legal, giving the non-Jew all rights of ownership over the chametz that has been sold to him. All *chametz* that is to be sold must be placed in a special room, cabinet(s) or closet(s), together with chametz dishes and utensils, until after Passover. These areas should be locked or closed off so that access to it will be difficult for us. However, during Pesach, the non-Jew who purchased the Chametz must have access to these areas if he wants, so he can take **his** Chametz. Your home address, as well as your office address(es) should be listed on the agency form which authorizes the Rabbi to sell your chametz. The formal sale of Chametz will take place at YIJE at about 10:30 on Monday, March 29.

After the conclusion of the festival, the Rabbi may re-purchase the chametz from the non-Jew. **You should wait at least one hour after Passover before using this chametz, to give the Rabbi time to complete the re-purchase of the chametz and restore its ownership to you.**

For those who travel to Israel, or other points East, where Pesach begins earlier, a separate sale of chametz is arranged earlier (at YIJE at about noon on Sunday, March 28.)

2. Bedikat Chametz. The search for chametz is made on **Sunday evening, March 29, 2010**, immediately after dark (**8:01 PM**). By that time, your home should be thoroughly cleaned of all chametz except for food you have set aside for the bedikat chametz ceremony and the chametz you intend to eat before it becomes prohibited. Traditionally, we spread 10 small pieces of bread, or other Chametz item, (these can be placed in baggies to avoid the spread of crumbs) to be gathered up throughout the home during a search by the light of a single-wick candle. The

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placement of these 10 pieces of chametz should be such as to encourage a thorough search; they should *not* all be placed in open view. The Bracha said before conducting the search can be found at the beginning of your Haggada. Once the search has been completed, The collected chametz should be kept in a sealed bag or cloth, and carefully set aside to be burned the following morning.

Those who leave home before Sunday evening, must carry out the search the night before departure. However, since this is not the normal evening for *bedika*, no bracha is recited. After reaching one's destination and on the morning of *Erev Passover* (Monday, March 29, 2010), the statement of *bitul* (see 4, below) should be pronounced at the required time of the place where the chametz is kept, or where you are, whichever is earlier.

3. Bitul Chametz. After the search for the chametz has been completed, a formal renunciation of ownership or desire to benefit from any undiscovered chametz in one's possession must be recited, in a language which is understood. It is customary to recite the bitul chametz statement, in Aramaic, and English. (Also found in the Haggada.)

4. Biur Chametz On Monday, March 29, 2010, chametz may not be eaten after 10:30 a.m. Eastern Standard Time in the Jamaica Estates area. All chametz that has not been sold (see prior section) must be burned on Monday, March 29, 2010, no later than 11:45 a.m. Eastern Standard Time in the Jamaica Estates area. **Another** formal renunciation of ownership is recited (also found in the Haggada.)

Taanit B'chorim - Fast of the First Born.

On Monday, March 29, 2010, Taanit B'chorim, Fast of First Born Sons, is held to commemorate their deliverance from death during the tenth plague in Egypt. It is customary for first-born sons to participate in the meal served in celebration of a mitzva, such as a Brit Mila (circumcision) or siyum (the completion of a tractate of the Talmud). Those who attend one of these events on the eve of Passover celebrate with the partaking of refreshments and are then exempt from this fast. There will be a Siyyum after each Shacharit Minyan at YIJE.

THE SEDER:

Passover Seder is a time when families come together to relive our Exodus from enslavement in Egypt, and rejoice in our receipt of the Torah on Mount Sinai. Passover is, in essence, the birthday of the People of Israel, the defining event that brought us together for the first time as a nation and set the stage for our arrival in the Land of Israel after hundreds of years in exile.

Passover, through the Seder, is an active demonstration of both our spiritual and physical redemption from Egypt; the foods we eat, prayers we say, and the stories we tell bring this experience to life. Our guide is the Haggadah — a book filled with Scripture, Rabbinic teachings, songs, prayers and rituals — a work unique to the holiday of Passover.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE SEDER:**A- Three Shmura Matzot**, which are especially prepared for use for the Mitzva of eating Matza.

Both *men and women* are required to eat *matza* at three specific points during the Seder:

- **“Motzi-Matza”** — a “kezayit” portion of Shmura Matzo equivalent in size to 6 inches by 4 inches is eaten immediately after the appropriate blessings are recited.
- **“Koraich”** — a “kezayit” portion of Shmura Matzo equivalent to 6 inches by 3 inches for the sandwich of matza and maror, is eaten prior to the main meal.
- **“Afikomen”** — dessert — a “kezayit” portion of Shmura Matzo equivalent in size to 6 inches by 4 inches is eaten at the conclusion of the Seder meal, right before ”bentching” (and hopefully before Chatzot - 12:58am.)
- *One who for health reasons cannot eat matza, an equivalent amount of Shmura Matza meal may be substituted.*

B - The Seder Plate: The Seder plate, upon which all the symbols of Passover are placed, is at the center of the celebration. A large plate is set at the head of the table (and in many households, before each guest at the Seder) and includes the following items:

1- A roasted (broiled) meat bone, on the upper right, commemorates the Korban Pesach (Passover Sacrifice) It is preferable to use a “forearm” (eg chicken wing) to remind us of God’s redemptive “Outstretched arm.”

2- A roasted egg, on the upper left, commemorates the Korban Chagiga (festival offering).

3- Maror (bitter herbs: romaine lettuce leaves or horseradish) placed in the center *and* at bottom, commemorates the bitter slavery suffered by our people during their long stay in Egypt. Romaine lettuce is preferable to horseradish.

4- Charoset, on the lower right, a mixture of nuts, apples, cinnamon, and wine, symbolizes the mortar used by our ancestors in Egypt to make the bricks with which to built cities for Pharaoh. Before eating the Marror, it is dipped into the Charoset.

5- Karpas (celery, potatoes, parsley, or any vegetable) on the lower left, to be dipped in salt-water during the Seder service, signaling the festive nature of the meal and to arouse the curiosity of the children.

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About the Mitzva of eating Marror... Each leaf of Romaine lettuce must be carefully inspected to ensure that there are no insects. ***Alei Katif Lettuce*** (or Bodek) is recommended, as these are grown in a manner which eliminates much of the infestation problem. These leaves must still be washed and checked, however, to ensure that they are insect-free.

If using pure, grated horseradish, use the following amounts:

Both men and women are required to eat marror at two specific points during the Seder:

- **“Marror”** - a “kezayit” portion of marror (Romaine lettuce leaves to cover an area of 10 by 8 inches, Romaine stalks enough leaves to cover an area of 3 by 5 inches, or ground undiluted horseradish of an amount that can be compacted into a vessel measuring 1.1 fluid ounces.)
- **“Koraich”** — in a matzo Sandwich, a “kezayit” portion of marror (for Romaine lettuce the same amount as above, or ground undiluted horseradish of an amount that can be compacted into a vessel measuring 0.7 fluid ounces.)

C- Four Cups of Wine: Since everyone is obligated to drink four goblets of wine during the Seder to commemorate the redemption of our people, each person attending the Seder should have his or her own cup of wine. (An additional goblet is placed on the table, in honor of Eliyahu the prophet. This goblet will be filled with wine in the course of the Seder, but is not drunk. Some have the custom to use this wine for Kiddush on the following day – at lunch.)

For these four cups of wine, the cup must contain at least 3.3 fluid ounces (revi’it) in size. One must drink a majority of each cup (rov kos) to fulfill this Mitzva.

Full strength (undiluted) wine is required for the Arba Kosot, unless one’s health does not permit. In which case one may dilute the wine with grape juice with the least amount of grape juice possible. If for health reasons one cannot use wine at all, one may substitute grape juice.

D – Haggadot Each person attending the Seder should have his or her own understandable Haggada. There are many wonderful Haggadot available in English. Some prefer to use one Haggada uniformly at the Seder, so that everyone may more easily follow and recite the Haggada. (The Artsroll Family Haggada is one excellent choice for this purpose.) Some prefer a variety of Haggadot, with commentaries, which will add excitement and newness to the Seder experience. A wide variety of such Haggadot are available to suit your taste, with comments in Hebrew and/or in English. These can be perused and purchased at the local Jewish bookstores.

Both ***men and women*** are required to relate the story of our Exodus from Egypt.

- The Torah teaches us that one is specifically obligated to tell the story of Passover to the children (V’hegadita l’vincha). It is therefore important for everyone present, and children in particular, to understand the story. Throughout the Seder, it is appropriate to offer commentary or insights into the Exodus, and anyone who amplifies the story through questions, interpretations, or discussion, is deemed to be “praiseworthy.” Most importantly, children should be encouraged to raise any questions they have at the Seder — separate from the well-known “Ma Nishtana” — to further demonstrate the true meaning of freedom.
- In particular, everyone is minimally obligated to recite the section where Rabban Gamliel explains the meaning of the three main “eating” Mitzvot of Pesach Night – the Pesach, Matza, and Marror.

Kashering for Pesach 5770 – A Practical Guide

I am hopeful that the following practical guide will facilitate your ability to prepare your kitchen for Pesach. As you proceed through your Pesach preparations, please feel free to call or email me with any questions.

home study 718-454-0865 email - rabbi@yije.org - urgent calls 917-843-3442

There are 4 methods to *Kasher utensils*

- 1) **Libbun** - Incinerating;
- 2) **Hagola** –Purging- immersing in boiling water
- 3) **Eruy Roschim** - Purging by pouring boiling water over the item (e.g. from a Pesach teapot) ;
- 4) **Milui V'eruy** - Soaking.

All kashering must be preceded by cleaning the utensil, and letting the utensil sit idle for 24 hours, before kashering. (If for some reason, the 24 hour “idle period” is not maintained, call Rabbi Hochberg for an emergency alternate procedure.) The only exception to this rule is something koshered by **Libbun gammur** (direct fire.) Such items can be cleaned, and then may be kashered immediately.

1). **LIBBUN** is divided into two categories:

Libbun Gamur: Heating Metal To A Glow. This can be accomplished by direct fire, such as a blow torch, or by running an item through the self-cleaning oven cycle.

Libbun Kal: heating metal so that paper will burn on the other side of the heated utensil. An example of this is setting your oven to the highest temperature for one hour. Any metal utensil used in the oven for baking, must be heated to a glow if they are to be used on *Pesach*.

The Stove must be *kashered* if it is to be used for *Pesach*. This includes the **oven**, the **cooktop**, and the **broiler**. No part of the stove can be considered *kashered* for *Pesach* unless it is completely clean, and free from any baked-on food or grease.

The Oven: A **conventional** oven, gas or electric, as well as **continuous cleaning** oven must first be cleaned with an oven cleaner to remove baked on grease. If a caustic type of oven cleaner (such as Easy-Off) is used to clean the oven and some stubborn spots remain after the caustic cleaner has been applied a second time with similar results, the remaining spots may be disregarded. A **continuous cleaning** oven, may be cleaned by the continuous clean method. In both types of ovens, once the oven and racks have been cleaned, they may be *kashered* by **libbun kal**. The requirement of *libbun kal* is satisfied by turning the oven to the broil or highest setting for one hour. In a gas oven the broil setting will allow the flame to burn continuously. In a conventional electric oven the highest setting, broil or 550°F, *kashers* the oven. Only *libbun kal* is required for the oven racks, since it is usual to cook food in a pan, not directly on the racks themselves.

A **Self cleaning** oven may be cleaned and *kashered* simultaneously by the self-cleaning cycle at its highest setting.

Convection ovens, and combination **Convection –Microwave** ovens may be cleaned and kashered by the same method as conventional ovens.

Microwave ovens may be koshered (after cleaning and allowing to sit idle for 24 hours) by pacing boiling water into paper or Styrofoam cups or bowls in the oven. Turn the oven on high,

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and wait until you see the water steaming. Let steam for 60 seconds. The turntable should be replaced or removed, and a corrugated cardboard or Styrofoam (about 1/4 inch thick or more) should be placed on the bottom of the microwave. The inside of the door should preferably be covered (e.g., with saran wrap.) For an alternate method, see p. 86 in the OU Pesach Guide.

Cooktops: On a conventional **gas range** the cast iron or metal grates upon which the pots on the range sit, may be inserted into the oven after they have been thoroughly cleaned. The grates can then be *kashered* simultaneously with the oven. Another method to *kasher* the grates is to cover the grates with a wide pot (to spread the flame) and turn the burner on the highest setting for fifteen minutes. The rest of the range should be cleaned and covered with a double layer of heavy duty aluminum foil which remains there during *Pesach*. The burners do not need further *kashering* or covering. If the rest of the cooktop is stainless steel, it may be kashered by removing it and pouring boiling water over it.

On a conventional **electric cooktop**, one kashers the burners by turning the burners on the highest setting for a few minutes until they are **red-hot**. The drip pans should be thoroughly cleaned and need not be *kashered*. The remaining cooktop areas should be cleaned and covered, just as the gas top above.

The burner areas of **Glass, Corning, Halogen or Ceran** electric smoothtop range may be kashered by turning on the elements until they glow. The burner area is now considered kosher for *Pesach*. The remaining areas of the cooktop cannot be *koshered*.

For gas stovetops with a glass surface, one may *kasher* the grates in the oven with a *libbun kal* (550° F for forty minutes). In most such models the grates cover the entire top of the stove and there should be no problem adjusting pots on the stovetop. Food which falls through the grates and touches the glass surface should not be eaten.

For those models where the grates do not cover the entire cooktop surface, one should place a trivet on the open glass area to move pots onto, as no food or pots may come in direct contact with the non-*kashered* glass surface.

Broilers and Grills: The broiler pan and grill can be *kashered* only by *Libbun Gammur* (direct fire) until it becomes red-hot.

Since food is broiled or roasted directly on the pan or grill, they must be heated to a glow in order to be used on *Pesach*. This can be done either by using a blowtorch, or in the case of an outdoor grill, by sandwiching the grate between the charcoal briquets and setting them on fire. An alternate method is to replace the broiler pan or grates of the grill. The empty broiler or grill cavity must then be *kashered* by cleaning and setting it to broil for one hour. If one does not intend to use the broiler on *Pesach*, one may still use the oven, even without *kashering* the broiler, provided that the broiler has been thoroughly cleaned. Similarly, other cooktop inserts such as a griddle or a barbecue broiler would require *libbun gamur*, heating the surface to a red glow before usage. If not, the insert should be cleaned and not used for *Pesach*. If the grill has side burners, they should be treated like cooktop grates, assuming no food has been placed directly on it.

Warming Drawers - Warming drawers can be *kashered* by (after cleaning and allowing to sit idle for 24 hours) by heating at the highest setting for one hour. The floor of the drawer must be covered with heavy duty foil, and items being warmed should be totally wrapped before warming in the oven.

2. HAGOLA: (Purging- immersing in boiling water)

Metal utensils that have been used for cooking, serving or eating hot *chometz* may be *kashered* by cleaning them thoroughly, waiting twenty-four hours and then immersing them, one by one, into a *kosher-for-Pesach* pot of water which has been heated and is maintaining a rolling boil when the vessel is immersed.

The metal utensil or vessel should be submerged in the boiling water for a few seconds. The utensils undergoing the *kashering* process may not touch each other. In other words, if a **set of flatware** is being *kashered* for *Pesach*, one cannot take all the knives, forks and spoons and put them in the boiling water together. They should be placed into the boiling water separately. A special *kashering* suggestion is to place a few items into a onion or potato sack (which is like a net) and shake them while they are immersed in the boiling water and so they do not touch each other. The process is finalized by rinsing the *kashered* items in cold water. If tongs are used to grip the utensil, the utensil will have to be immersed a second time with the tong in a different position so that the boiling water will touch the initially gripped area. The entire utensil does not have to be *kashered* at once; it may be done in parts. *The water must be kept at a racing boil throughout the kashering process. (Placing several nails in the bottom of the pot will intensify the heat and keep the water boiling more efficiently.)*

A non-kosher for *Pesach* pot may also be used for the purpose of *kashering*, provided that it is thoroughly clean and has not been used for twenty-four hours. However, it is the custom to make the pot kosher for *Pesach* before using it for *kashering*. This can be accomplished by cleaning the pot, leaving it dormant for twenty-four hours, filling the pot completely with water, waiting until the water comes to a rolling boil, and throwing in a hot stone or brick which has been heated on another burner. The hot rock will cause the water to bubble more furiously and run over the top ridge of the pot on all sides at one time. The pot is now *kashered*.

3. ERUY ROSCHIM (pouring boiling water)

Stainless steel sinks and **Granite sinks** can be *kashered* using the following method. Clean the sink thoroughly. Hot water should not be used or poured in the sink for twenty-four hours prior to *kashering*. It is recommended that the sink be covered/blocked to ensure that it is not used for the twenty-four hours before *kashering*. *Kashering* is accomplished by pouring boiling hot water from a *Pesach* kettle/pot over every part of the stainless steel sink. The poured water must touch every part of the sink including the drain and the spout of the water faucet. It is likely that the *kashering* kettle will need to be refilled a few times before the *kashering* can be completed.

China, Porcelain or corian sinks cannot be *kashered* at all. These sinks should be cleaned, not used for twenty-four hours. Separate basins should be used for dairy and meat dishes which are to be washed.

Granite, Marble, or Stainless Steel Countertops may also be *kashered* through *eruy roschim* (same procedure as the sink) - Formica, Corian, and **Plastic** countertops cannot be *kashered* for

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Pesach. They should be cleaned and covered. To place hot food and utensils on these countertops, cardboard or thick pads must be used to cover the counter.

Silver or glass goblets which are used exclusively (even during the year) for Pesachdik **wine**, may be cleaned thoroughly and then rinsed well, and used for Pesach.

General Kashering note: A higher level of kashering will always kasher something which requires a lesser method of kashering. That is, where *libbun kal* helps, certainly *libbun gamur* is good; where *hagola* helps, surely *libbun kal* is good; where *eruy* helps, certainly *hagola* and *libbun* help.

Refrigerator and Freezer – should be thoroughly clean, taking apart the shelves to clean properly. Lining shelves is not necessary.

The **Shabbos Blech** needs to be replaced for Pesach.

Tables should be completely covered with a plastic, paper or other material, which will serve as a *Pesach* “tabletop” upon which to place appropriate dairy or tablecloths throughout Pesach.

Instant hot devices and individual hot/cold water filters that are connected to the sink with a separate spigot should be *kashered* along with the sink; boiling water should be poured over the spigot.

Water Coolers – Cold water coolers should be cleaned thoroughly. The hot spigot on a water cooler should not be used if it came into contact with *chometz* during the year.

Kitchen Items that cannot be kashered:

Bread Machine, Crockpot, China, Colanders, Corning Ware, Dishwasher, George Foreman Grill, Knives w/ Plastic Handles, Melmac, Mixer, Pasta Maker, Plastic Utensils, Porcelain (Enamel) Utensils, Pyrex, Rolling Pin, Sandwich Maker, Silverstone, Stoneware, Synthetic Rubber, Teflon, Toaster/Toaster Oven, Waffle Iron.

Ashkenazim do not kasher drinking glasses which were used for hot beverages, or washed in hot water, such as in a dishwasher

PLEASE NOTE While in general, we do not kasher from Milchige to Fleishige or vice versa, after the *Pesach kashering* process has taken place, the status of these newly *kashered* utensils is pareve, and thus may now be may be changed from *milchig* to *fleishig*, or vice versa.