

B”H

Rabbi Chaikin’s Detailed Pre-Pesach & Seder Guide

Hilchos U’Minhagei Pesach 5780

In merit of Yakov Aharon ben Freidel Gnesha Bracha

Purchase and care for your matzos

- Keep the matzos complete.
- Check for folds in the Matzos, called Kfulos. This means that the fire did not go through all the way. You can break off the fold of the Matzah. If the Matzah still looks complete – even if its missing a small piece – it can be used as a Shleima.
- If the fold is in the middle, you can gently knock it out of the larger Matzah.
- Check to find large bubbles in the matzos, and remove them in the same manner as Kfulos.
- The Rebbe strongly emphasized that we exclusively use handmade matzos throughout Pesach, even for children.
- The Rebbe encouraged us to purchase or sponsor extra pounds of matzah to be made available for Mivtzah Matzah, to promote observance of Pesach and the celebration of the Pesach seder. Donations can be given to Rabbi Chaikin.

Preparing your business:

- If your business is nearby it is good to search it for Chametz after searching your home.
- If your office is far away, you can search earlier. It is best to do the search in your business as close to the actual Bedikas Chometz time as possible.
- For this year: if you cannot get to your office, the Rabbonim have allowed you to simply sell the property with your Chametz and nullify it.

Search for Chametz

- This year when we will all Daven at home, Maariv is said before the Bedika.
- Involve the children as much as possible, it’ll give them more excitement if they feel they are a part of it.
- As you distribute the ten pieces make a list of the places where the Chametz is hidden. This will help to avoid the Halachik complications of lost Chametz!
- Begin by making a Bracha and anyone helping you search should listen, say amen, and be Yotze.
- Start the search in the room you said the Bracha in, move to the next room etc. when you come back you will say the Kol Chamira.
- Chabad custom – put the bread and the kit in a paper bag and tie it shut with a thread or string, leaving the wooden spoon sticking out.
- Put it in a safe place over night.

Destroying Chametz – before 12:20 PM on Wednesday, April 8 2020

- Since there will not be communal fires, each person must build their own fire to burn their Chametz.
- The Chametz must be burnt to the extent that a dog would not eat it.
- This year only: since some people are not comfortable making fires on their properties to burn their Chametz, the best thing to do is to crumble the Chametz into small crumbs and flush it down the toilet. The kit should be wiped down and thrown in the garbage.
- It is very important that everyone should say with a full heart Kol Chamirah, even though you said it the night before.

Eruv Tavshilin

- This year on Erev Pesach we have to make an Eruv Tavshilin since Yom Tov runs right into Shabbos.
- Here's how: Erev Yom Tov, set aside a complete Matzah and one portion of a cooked dish of fish, egg, or meat.
- This Eruv will allow you to prepare food for Shabbos on the second day of Yom Tov. Don't let these items be eaten until after you finish cooking for Shabbos.
- The Eruv is based on the idea that you will prepare food on Friday (Yom Tov) to be eaten the same day. Therefore, the food must be ready early enough to be eaten on Friday.
- The Alter Rebbe suggests using the Matzah of the Eiruv for more Mitzvos by making it part of Lechem Mishne on Friday night (don't eat it yet) and Shabbos day – eating it in the Shabbos day Seudah.

Other things to do before Yom Tov

- Haircuts should be done before Chatzos of Erev Yom Tov.
- Send your children to sleep so that they should be alert during the Seder.
- Grind Charoses and Marror
- Prepare the saltwater
- Wash, dry and check the lettuce for bugs
- Look through your Matzos to find enough Shleimos (whole Matzos) for the Sedarim and Yom Tov meals.
- Prepare portions of Matzah in Ziploc bags for all Seder participants: The first Matzah = 1oz. for Koreich and Afikomen = 3/4 oz. (Easy way to calculate: How many Matzos come in a pound from your source? Divide that by 16oz.)
- Strip as much meat as possible from the Zero'ah and roast it.
- We don't eat any of the ingredients of Marror or Charoses until after the second Seder (other than in the Seder).

Important Note about Matza Sheruya, called Gebrachtz

- We go out of our way not to cause any Gebrachtz at all, checking every dish and cup to ensure there are no Matzah crumbs on them.
- At the table it is recommended to keep the Matzah in Ziploc bags and eat it away from the table.

Maariv for Pesach

- Full Hallel should be said before Aleinu, with great Simcha.

Setting the Ke'arah – the Seder Plate

- The Rebbe would verbalize the finely printed instructions as well as the liturgy beginning at the instructions for setting up the Ke'arah, the Seder Plate.

Matzah:

- A plate should be placed under the Matzos in a manner that it will not be seen.
- Put a napkin or cloth between each Matzah.
- We call the 3 matzos Keli which stands for Kohen, Levi & Yisroel.

The Simanim (the six items) on the Seder Plate

- The six Simanim should not be put in small vessels, instead, spread napkins under them and place them directly on the Matzah cover.

Beitza – The egg

- Should be hard boiled, in its shell.

Zero'ah – the roasted bone

- Usually a chicken neck is used. This year if you cannot get one, any chicken bone will suffice, but remove as much meat as possible like the chicken neck.

Marror and Chazeres

- Wrap ground or sliced horseradish in lettuce.

Charoses

- Made from apples, nuts, pears and wine – but don't add the wine until the step of Marror in during the Seder, see below.

Karpas

- We use a piece of raw onion, those who can't, can use a piece of cooked potato.
- We finish setting up by reciting or singing the 15 steps of the Seder.

The Steps of the Seder

Kadesh

- The cup for wine should hold at least 3.5 oz.
- We are meant to use red wine. If someone requires white wine, pour a bit of red wine into it to color it.
- We will recite Shehecheyanu at Kiddush, but women should not say it since they said it by candle lighting.
- The Rebbe emphasized that candles should be set on the Seder table or at least visible from the Seder table. Of course, for safety you can place only some of the candles on the table or they can be set on a nearby surface.
- During Kiddush we should look at the candles. While saying the Bracha, Borei Pri Hagofen we should look at the wine in our cups.
- We should try to drink the entire cup and this must be done while leaning to the left – Be'heseiba. (this is true for all four cups)

Urchatz

- We wash our hands without saying a Bracha.
- The Rebbe, who would verbalize all of the finely printed instructions would read the instructions for both Urchatz and Karpas before washing his hands, not to interrupt unnecessarily between the washing and the eating. Giving relevant instructions to guests or children would be considered an acceptable interruption.
- Dip the karpas into the salt water three times, and afterwards recite the Bracha.
- While reciting the Bracha of Borei Pri Ho'adamah for Karpas, have in mind also the Marror and Chazeres.

Karpas

- We do not lean to eat Karpas.
- We try to eat a small portion – less than a Kezayis (olive size) – in order to avoid having to make an after Bracha. This way the Bracha we said can cover the Marror and Chazeres.

Yachat

- We break the middle Matzah in half, and the larger portion into five pieces, all while it is still inside the Matzah cover.
- Cover and hide the larger portion for Afikomen.

Maggid

- Shulchan Aruch Harav (473:43) says that children should understand the main parts of the Haggadah. They are:
 - The paragraph “עבדים היינו-We were slaves...”
 - From “...מתחילה עובדי...-In the beginning...” until after the ten plagues
 - From “מצה זו” until Hallel.
 - The final Bracha “...אשר גאל...-Who has redeemed us....”
- Uncover the Matzah before Hei Lachma Anya
- Wherever the Haggadah says to lift the Seder plate we only uncover the Matzah.
- The Rebbe was careful to roll the cover back so that all three matzos are visible.
- We say “Hei Lachma Anya” after which we push the Matzah a bit away, and pour the second cup.
- Before the Mah Nishtana when it says to “Remove the Seder Plate”, the Rebbe would only move it slightly.
- After the children say the four questions the adults should also say it with all the accompanying Yiddish (or English) liturgy.
- After everyone has said Mah Nishtana, pull the Matzah towards you and roll back the cover. Then begin reciting the Haggadah.
- At Vehi She’amda we must cover the Matzah and lift the cup in our palms as we do for Kiddush.
- Afterwards we replace the cup and uncover the matzos.
- At the mention of the plagues, we pour off a bit of wine for each one.
- Chabad Custom: we do not dip our fingers into the wine.
- The kabbalistic meditations listed in the Haggadah in connection with the plagues are for everyone.
- When saying, “Pesach Matzah uMarror” the Rebbe would look at the Matzah and Marror
- For the paragraph of “Matzah Zu” the Rebbe would lay a hand on the Matzah.
- For the paragraph of “Marror Zeh” the Rebbe would place his right on the Marror and his left on the Chazeres.
- We lift the cup for “Lefichach” but we set it down during Hallel. We lift the cup again for the final Bracha of Maggid.

Rochtzo

- Before washing the Rebbe would verbalize all the instructions from Rochtzo through Koreich, so as not to interrupt between.

Motzie-Matzah

- After washing for bread, you take hold of all three matzos (2-1/2) and recite the Bracha of Hamotzie Lechem Min Ha'aretz.
- The Rebbe made a point to put a finger between the matzos making a gap between them.
- Let the bottom Matzah go, and make the Bracha of Al Achilas Matzah - having in mind to fulfill the mitzvah of eating Matzah on Pesach. Have in mind the Matzah you will eat now, and for Koreich, and for Afikoman.
- We try not to interrupt with unnecessary speech from Matzah until after Koreich.
- The leader must eat 1oz. of both the top and middle matzos, and we try to bite both matzos together.
- We try to consume them all within 4 minutes.
- The leader must eat both because there is a dispute as to which is the main Matzah.
- Others at the Seder should have their own Matzos, measured and prepared in Ziploc bags before you wash, so as not to interrupt. The leader should share a small piece of the Seder Plate matzos with each person.
- We do not dip Matzah in salt because we don't want to augment the taste of the Mitzvah. (At every other time we are extra careful to dip in salt or sprinkle salt on the Matzah.)
- Matzah must be eaten leaning, Be'heseiba.

Marror

- Chabad Minhag (the Rebbe's Minhag) is to scoop a small portion of the Charoses from the Seder plate onto a separate plate and mix it with wine, leaving the rest of the Charoses dry for Koreich.
- Dip the lettuce and horseradish into the Charoses.
- Chabad Minhag is to shake off the Charoses so it shouldn't weaken the taste of Marror.

Koreich

- The Matzah used for Koreich should measure at least 3/4oz.
- The lettuce (Chazeres) should be dipped in the dry Charoses and then the Charoses shaken off.

Shulchan Orech

- We begin the meal with a hardboiled egg dipped in salt water.
- It is a good idea to drink towards the end of the meal because after the Afikomen we shouldn't eat or drink other than the Seder wine.

Tzafun

- At the first Seder, the Afikomen should be eaten before midnight – 1:27 AM.
- There is dispute as to why we eat Afikomen: either to commemorate the Korban Pesach or to commemorate the Matzah that was eaten with the Korban Pesach. At the Rebbe's Seder they ate two Kazeysim. If this is hard, the Rebbe said you can make a condition, that you are eating the Kezayis of Afikomen to fulfill the Halacha according to whichever opinion is correct.

Beirach

- Before benching fill the Cup of Eliyahu Hanavi.
- After benching, send two people to open the door for Eliyahu Hanavi.
- Those at the door recite Shfoch Chamascha there, and those at the table with say it there.

Hallel-Nirtza

- At the end of the Seder, after having said the after-Bracha for the fourth cup of wine we add some wine to the Cup of Eliyahu Hanavi, then pour the cup back into the bottle.

First night of Pesach

- This night is called Leil Shimurim (Night of Guarding), and only say the first paragraph of Shema at bedtime and the Bracha of Hamapil.

First day of Pesach

- We begin to say Morid Hatal in the Amida from Musaf of the first day.
- Each one should read the whole Piyut-litury connected with this.

Second night of Pesach

- We begin counting Sefiras Ha'omer.

Shabbos Chol Hamoed

- Any time one Davens alone on a Friday night the special paragraph "Velomar Barchu" is added in place of Barchu.