

PASSOVER (What to do and when to do it...)

A. *A month before Passover:*

- B. Begin **learning about Passover** and studying its laws.
- C. Begin the **house cleaning process**. Methodically inspect and rid every part of your home of any traces of **chametz**. Be on the lookout for crumbs of all sorts, hidden stashes of crunchy chocolate, fermented drinks (nearly all are made with grain), etc. **Make a list** of all the rooms in your house, and cross off each one as you complete it.

Enforce the pre-Passover house rules: No food may leave the kitchen. After eating, clothes must be brushed off and hands thoroughly washed.

- D. **Set aside a special space** or spaces to stash the chametz you will be selling for the duration of Passover (*see next item*). This can be a closet, a cabinet in the kitchen, or a room in the basement, as long as it can be locked and inaccessible to you for all of Passover.
- E. Arrange for the **selling of your chametz**. Fill out a form and bring it to your Rabbi, delegating to him the task of selling your chametz before Passover. (You can also **sell your chametz online**.)
- F. Buy the Passover essentials: **purchase your Matzah** and **wine** in advance, and store it in a place where it is absolutely safe from any contact with any chametz. If you're not making a Seder at home, your local Chabad-Lubavitch center has reserved a place for you! **Click here** to register for a Seder at the location of your choice.

G. *A few days before Passover:*

- H. Begin work on making your **kitchen** "Kosher for Passover." Put away all utensils that have been used year-round, and lock or seal those cabinets. Put away all non-kosher-for-Passover food, and seal those cabinets. Once your kitchen is completely clean, do the **special procedure to kosher your kitchen and appliances** for Passover.

(Now that your kitchen is clean and all your non-kosher-for-Passover food put away, you will only be able to prepare and eat kosher-for-Passover foods there. If you're not ready to start eating only kosher-for-Passover food yet, you can buy ready-prepared food and eat it outside of the house, or in a place that will be "sold" for the duration of Passover.)

- I. Take stock of your **Passover inventory**. Take out any special-for-Passover dishes or silver from where they are stored. Polish the silver. Make sure you have **Haggadahs** for the seder.

- J. Do your **Passover shopping**. Buy the **seder ingredients**, plus general food for Passover. Store these in your newly cleaned refrigerator and cabinets -- empty, of course, of any non-Passover food. You can now begin **cooking for the holiday** in your Kosher-for-Passover kitchen.
- K. Make sure that your **holiday clothes** and shoes are ready, ironed, and polished. Treat yourself to **something new** -- an outfit, shoes, or even just a tie.
- L.

Thursday morning (April 17th):

- M. If you are a first-born son, or the father of a first-born son under the age of Bar Mitzvah, participate in a *Siyyum* or other mitzvah feast, in order to be absolved of the **"fast of the firstborn."**

Thursday night (48 hours before Passover):

- N. Do the ritual **search for Chametz**. Take a candle, a spoon, and a feather, and search the house for any remaining or forgotten chametz.
- O. *Friday morning:*
- P. **Burn** any leftover Chametz that is not being sold, including anything that was found Thursday night at the Search for the Chametz. The only chametz which should remain is the challah which will be eaten by the two Shabbat meals. The chametz is burned before the end of the fifth "seasonal hour" of the morning ([click here](#) for local times.) By this time, all cabinets and areas containing chametz that will be sold should be sealed.)

Friday Afternoon:

- Q. **Prepare for the Seder**. Ready the **items for the Seder plate**, set the table, and do last minute things for the Seder meal. Light Shabbat candles before sunset ([click here](#) for local times).

Shabbat morning:

- R. The **deadline for eating chametz** is approximately two hours before midday ([click here](#) for local times). Past this point, no chametz is eaten until after the festival.

Shabbat afternoon:

- S. Recite the "**Order of the Passover Offering**," recalling and reliving the *Korban Pesach* which was offered in the Holy Temple at this time.

Saturday night:

- T. **Light the festival candles** after nightfall from a pre-existing flame; [click here](#) for local times.
- U. Go to the synagogue for the **evening holiday services**, which include the special addition of the Hallel prayer.
- V. Hold the first **Passover Seder**. Follow the **15 steps**, recite the **Haggadah**, tell and relive the **story of the Exodus**, and enjoy the **matzah, wine, and bitter herbs**. Make sure to eat the **Afikoman** by **midnight**.

W. *Sunday morning:*

- X. Go to the synagogue for the Passover **prayer services** (which include a special **prayer for dew**) and **Torah reading**.

Y. *Sunday night:*

- Z. The **Omer Count** begins tonight.

Outside the Holy Land, tonight begins a second day of *Yom Tov* (hallowed festival day) which is basically a repeat of the first. Light the festival candles from a pre-existing flame (as it is forbidden to create a new flame on *Yom Tov*) after nightfall. The entire **Seder** is repeated tonight. (This time, however, there's no midnight deadline; you can go on until morning.) The next day, Wednesday, is the second festival day; go to the synagogue for the special Passover prayers and Torah reading.

Monday night:

- AA. Tonight begin the four "**intermediate days**" of Passover. Celebrate the intermediate days with matzah, kosher-for-Passover cooking, family trips (in the newly cleaned car), and more retelling of the Exodus story. It's still Passover, so we don't eat, own, or derive enjoyment from Chametz, but most activities prohibited the first and last two days are permitted (except on Shabbat). We also add special passages to our prayers: Hallel, Yaaleh Veyavo, and Musaf.

BB. *Friday evening:*

- CC. Tonight begin the **final two festival days** of Passover. **Light candles** at the **specified time**, and enjoy **festive meals** Friday night, Shabbat afternoon, Saturday night, and Sunday afternoon.

There is a custom to stay awake Friday night (the night of the **Splitting of the Sea**) and **study Torah through the night**.

DD. *Sunday morning:*

EE. **Yizkor**, the memorial prayer for departed parents, is recited following the reading of the Torah during the morning prayer service.

FF. *Sunday afternoon:*

GG. As the day wanes, spend the final hours of Passover with "**Moshiach's Meal**" -- a special feast in honor of the Redemption. We've spent eight days celebrating the exodus from Egypt. Now, as we leave Passover, we pray for the exodus from our present exile and a brighter tomorrow.

HH. *Sunday night:*

II. At nightfall, the Passover holiday comes to an end. Make **Havdalah** over your last cup of kosher-for-Passover wine. Put away the Passover dishes, Haggadahs, and all other Passover items, locking them away until next year. Then, ... you can once again enjoy chametz food and drinks, and feast on pizza, bread, beer -- anything kosher. (Just make sure it's not chametz that was in the possession of a Jew during Passover.) But as you do, don't forget the eight days of freedom you've just experienced, and remember that throughout the year, as you enjoy all your leavened food, you still carry a bit of the Matzah spirit with you!

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1825/jewish/Passover-A-to-Z.htm

The Story of Passover

Israel's Enslavement

Joseph and his brothers died, and the children of Israel multiplied in the land of Egypt. They held important positions and played an important role in the political, cultural, and economic life of the country. It is not surprising that they stirred the jealousy of the native Egyptians who felt outshone by the "foreigners."

Old King Pharaoh died, too, and a new one ascended the throne. He had no sympathy or love for the children of Israel, and chose to forget all that Joseph had done for Egypt. He decided to take action against the growing influence and numbers of the children of

Israel.

He called his council together, and they advised him to enslave these people and oppress them before they grew too powerful. Pharaoh limited the personal freedom of the Hebrews, put heavy taxes on them, and recruited their men into forced labor battalions under the supervision of harsh taskmasters.

Thus the children of Israel had to build cities, erect monuments, construct roads, work in the quarries, and hew stones or make bricks and tiles. But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, and the harder the restrictions imposed upon them became, the more the children of Israel increased and multiplied.

Finally, when King Pharaoh saw that forcing the Hebrews to do hard work did not succeed in suppressing their rapidly growing numbers, he decreed that all newly born male children of the Hebrews be thrown into the Nile River. Only daughters should be permitted to live.

Thus Pharaoh hoped to end the numerical increase of the Jewish population, and at the same time to eliminate a danger which, according to the predictions of his astrologers, threatened his own life in the person of a leader to be born to the children of Israel.

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/282275/jewish/Israels-Enslavement.htm

The Levites

The only group of Jews that escaped enslavement was the tribe of Levi. Levi was the last of Jacob's sons to die, and his influence over his tribe was great and lasting. They had taken over the Torah academy Jacob had established in Goshen, and they instructed the children of Israel in the knowledge of G-d and His holy teachings.

Thus they were occupied with spiritual matters and did not mix with the Egyptians, while many of their brethren had given up their old customs and way of life. Except for their language, clothing, and names, many of the children of Israel had become assimilated into the social and cultural environment of their Egyptian neighbors, and they were the ones to arouse the wrath of the Egyptians.

Only the children of Levi were, therefore, spared the slavery and oppression which the Egyptians imposed upon the rest of Israel.

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1602/jewish/The-Levites.htm

Moses' Parents

Levi's grandson, Amram, the son of Kehat, married Yocheved, and she bore him three children.

Their first child was a girl by the name of Miriam, who was later to become a great prophetess of the Jewish people.

The second child was Aaron, the highest priest of G-d, famous for his extraordinary love of peace. Next to his brother Moses, he was the greatest leader of our nation in his time.

It was Amram's youngest son Moses who was destined to lead the children of Israel from Egypt and to receive for them the Holy Torah on Mount Sinai.

Moses' Parents

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1600/jewish/Moses-Parents.htm

The Birth of Moses

The day approached when, according to the Egyptian astrologers, the liberator of the children of Israel was to be born. Since they did not know whether he would be of Jewish or Egyptian descent, all male children born that day, were to be thrown into the water by order of King Pharaoh.

This same day, the seventh of Adar, Yocheved, Amram's wife, gave birth to her third child, a boy. Right from the first moment of his birth, it became apparent that he was an extraordinary child, for the house was filled with a radiant light. His parents tried everything possible to prevent his falling into the hands of Pharaoh's men, who were continuously searching for newborn Jewish children.

After three months, Yocheved saw that she would not be able to conceal her child any longer. She therefore made a small, water-proof basket in which she put the child and set him down among the papyrus reeds growing on the brink of the Nile. While Yocheved tearfully returned home, her daughter Miriam remained nearby to watch the baby.

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/282276/jewish/The-Birth-of-Moses.htm

Moses becomes Tongue-tied

Once it happened that Moses was playing on King Pharaoh's lap. He saw the shining crown, studded with jewels, and reached for it and took it off.

Pharaoh, who was superstitious like all his fellow-Egyptians, and who in addition was always afraid of losing his throne, asked his astrologers and counselors for the meaning of this action of the infant.

Most of them interpreted it to mean that Moses was a threat to Pharaoh's crown and suggested that the child be put to death before he could do any harm. One of the king's counselors, however, suggested that they should first test the boy and see whether his action was prompted by intelligence, or he was merely grasping for sparkling things as any other child would.

Pharaoh agreed to this, and two bowls were set down before young Moses. One contained gold and jewels, and the other held glowing firecoals. Moses reached out for the gold, but an angel directed his hand to the coals.

Moses snatched a glowing coal and put it to his lips.

He burned his tongue, but his life was saved. After that fateful test, Moses suffered from a slight speech defect. He could not become an orator, but his words were to carry weight with all, for it was G-d's words that were spoken through his lips.

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1644/jewish/Moses-becomes-Tongue-tied.htm

Moses in Midian

A conspiracy and upheaval in the government of Cush forced Moses to flee again, and he went to Midian. The priest of Midian, Jethro, had once been one of King Pharaoh's foremost advisors, but because of his friendly attitude towards the Hebrews, he had to leave Pharaoh's court.

Jethro then settled in Midian, and became the highest priest of the land. A man of great intelligence, Jethro soon realized the silliness of idol-worship, and gave up his

priesthood. The people of Midian began to hate their erstwhile priest and persecuted him.

Often it happened that Jethro's daughters were driven away from the communal well when they came to water the flocks of their father, and had to wait to the very last, until the other shepherds were gone.

On the day Moses arrived in Midian, he saw the rough shepherds chase the daughters of Jethro away from the well. Moses stood up for the girls, and helped them water their sheep. On that day they returned to Jethro rather early, and he was astonished to see them back so soon. His daughters told him about the unexpected help. Jethro immediately invited Moses to his house and not long thereafter he gave him his oldest daughter Zipporah for a wife.

Zipporah bore Moses two children. The first one he called Gershom ("a stranger there") in commemoration of the fact that he was a stranger and exile in the land of Midian, and the second he called Eliezer, "G-d is my helper," in gratitude for G-d's protection.

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1647/jewish/Moses-in-Midian.htm

G-d Upholds the Covenant

The children of Israel could no longer endure their terrible suffering and persecution at the hands of their cruel taskmasters. Their cries for help, their supplications and prayers, coming from the very bottom of their hearts, pierced the ears of G-d.

G-d remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and decided to deliver their descendants from Egypt.

http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1648/jewish/G-d-Upholds-the-Covenant.htm