



# PASSOVER NEWSLETTER

## 2018 ✪ 5778

### Rabbi's Message

Following the end of the famine that plagued Egypt, Joseph, along with the entire generation, had passed away. The Torah then states: 'A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know of Joseph.' (Exodus 1:8)



How is it possible that anyone — let alone a king who followed the previous Pharaoh - could be unaware of all that Joseph had done for the country? How could anyone in Egypt forget the essential role he played in its survival? Can we imagine, for example, Andrew Johnson not ever having heard of Abraham Lincoln, the U.S. President who preceded him? Similarly, it defies logic that anyone could forget the one person who single-handedly saved Egypt and the entire world from famine.

One explanation offered is: Joseph wasn't forgotten in the sense that no one 'remembered' him. Rather, the significance of his life-saving contributions had simply faded from everyone's memory. As soon as Joseph's contributions were no longer needed, then the appreciation for Joseph ceased, as well. Difficult to imagine? It actually occurs in our lives all the time. A phrase we occasionally hear said to aging former high producers is, 'What have you done for me lately?' And with honest reflection, we may be guilty of a similar attitude. Think about it. People who have helped you enormously in one way or another, as time went on, faded from your memory. And following the passage of a significant amount of time, we may 'no longer know' our prior benefactor — be they a friend or relative.

The Yom Tov of Pesach is an opportunity to be reminded that gratitude has no expiration date. Many moving passages in the Haggadah emphasize the importance of carefully remembering the multiple miracles that the Almighty performed for our ancestors in Egypt, at the Sea, and in our sojourn to the Land of Israel. The timeless song *Dayenu* reminds us to appreciate the magnitude of each of the steps that led from servitude to our ultimate spiritual salvation with the gift of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. Pesach teaches us to stretch our collective memories by recalling the kind deeds Hashem did for us in 'the old days.' And by remembering the past, perhaps we can be inspired to express appreciation for more recent acts of kindness — those done for us by our parents, wives, husbands, teachers, and so many others.

We at Nusach Hari Bnai Zion have much to be grateful for as we approach Pesach in our beautiful building. Nothing short of extraordinary efforts have been undertaken by our shul's officers, board of directors, and lay leadership to enable us to utilize our 'home' that is second to none. Additionally, the ongoing commitment that requires hours of planning and preparation to ready our very well-attended programs, classes and beautiful weekly Shabbos services and Kiddushim is done lovingly and selflessly, behind the scenes, by so many. True gratitude is not defined by a person who doesn't forget; it's defined by the one who always remembers. This Pesach, let's take the opportunity to verbally express our appreciation to those who have done and continue to do so much for our dear families and our wonderful *kehila* (community) here at NHBZ.

My rebbitzen Chani joins me in wishing you and your family a *chag kosher v'sameach* — a wonderful, joyous Pesach.

*Rabbi Ze'ev Smason*

## About Passover

### What Is Passover?

The eight-day festival of Passover commemorates the emancipation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt. It is celebrated in the early spring, from the 15th through the 22nd of the Hebrew month of Nissan, which falls on **March 30 through April 7, 2018**. The festival is observed by avoiding leavened food, and it is highlighted by the Seder meals that include four cups of wine, eating matzah and bitter herbs, and retelling the story of the Exodus.

In Hebrew it is known as Pesach, which means 'to pass over', because G-d passed over the Jewish homes when killing the Egyptian firstborn on the very first Passover eve.

### The Passover Story in a Nutshell

After many decades of slavery to the Egyptian pharaohs, during which time the Israelites were subjected to backbreaking labor and unbearable horrors, G-d saw the people's distress and sent Moses to Pharaoh with a message: 'Send forth My people, so that they may serve Me.' But despite numerous warnings, Pharaoh refused to heed G-d's command. G-d then sent upon Egypt ten devastating plagues, afflicting them and destroying everything from their livestock to their crops.

At the stroke of midnight of 15 Nissan in the year 2448 from creation (1313 BCE), G-d visited the last of the ten plagues on the Egyptians, killing all their firstborn. While doing so, G-d spared the children of Israel, 'passing over' their homes—hence the name of the holiday. Pharaoh's resistance was broken, and he virtually chased his former slaves out of the land. The Israelites left in such a hurry, in fact, that the bread they baked as provisions for the way did not have time to rise. Six hundred thousand adult males, plus many more women and children, left Egypt on that day and began the trek to Mount Sinai and their birth as G-d's chosen people.

In ancient times, when the temple existed, the Passover observance included the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, which was roasted and eaten at the Seder on the first night of the holiday. This was the case until Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in the 1st century.

### Passover Observances

The first two days of Passover, which commemorate the Exodus, and last two days, which commemorate the crossing of the Sea of Reeds, are full-fledged holidays. We light holiday candles at night, recite *kiddush* and enjoy lavish holiday meals on both nights and days. We don't go to work, drive, write, or switch on or off electric devices. We are permitted to cook and to carry outdoors. The middle four days are called Chol Hamoed, semi-festive 'intermediate days,' when most forms of work are permitted.

To commemorate the unleavened bread that the Israelites ate when they left Egypt, we don't eat—or even possess—any *chametz* from midday of the day before Passover until the conclusion of the holiday. *Chametz* means leavened grain—any food or drink that contains even a trace of wheat, barley, rye, oats, spelt or their derivatives, and which wasn't guarded from leavening or fermentation. This includes bread, cake, cookies, cereal, pasta, and most alcoholic beverages. Moreover, almost any processed food or drink can be assumed to be *chametz* unless certified otherwise.

Ridding our homes of *chametz* is an intensive process. It involves a full-out spring-cleaning search-and-destroy mission during the weeks before Passover, and culminates with a ceremonial search for *chametz* on the night before Passover, and then a burning of the *chametz* ceremony on the morning before the holiday. *Chametz* that cannot be disposed of can be sold to a non-Jew (and bought back after the holiday).

Instead of *chametz*, we eat matzah—flat unleavened bread. It is a mitzvah to partake of matzah on the two Seder nights (see below for more on this), and during the rest of the holiday it is optional. It is ideal to use handmade *shmurah* matzah, which has been zealously guarded against moisture from the moment of the harvest.

## The Seder

The highlight of Passover is the Seder, observed on each of the first two nights of the holiday. The Seder is a fifteen-step family-oriented tradition and ritual-packed feast.

The focal points of the Seder are:

- Eating matzah.
- Eating bitter herbs—to commemorate the bitter slavery endured by the Israelites.
- Drinking four cups of wine or grape juice—a royal drink to celebrate our newfound freedom.
- The recitation of the Haggadah, a liturgy that describes in detail the story of the Exodus from Egypt. The Haggadah is the fulfillment of the biblical obligation to recount to our children the story of the Exodus on the night of Passover. It begins with a child asking the traditional 'Four Questions.'

## Passover Model Seder Class

Unfortunately, this newsletter came out too late to inform you about the Model Seder class presented by Rabbi Smason. Let it be a reminder to look for it next year!

## Passover Preparations

### Kashering for Pesach

**VAAD HOEIR PESACH GUIDE:** Detailed information about Kashering for Pesach can be found in the Vaad Hoeir Pesach Guide for 2018 at

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/0f9907ec-576e-4fca-bea7-f815d0fb17e7>

**KASHERING UTENSILS:** *For information on kashering utensils for Pesach, please call Rabbi Smason to verify procedures.* You can kasher utensils for Pesach at the Vaad Hoeir office at 4 Millstone Campus Drive as follows: **1)** in the parking lot of the Vaad Hoeir Office on **Sunday, March 25 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Wednesday, March 28 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** **2)** at the Vaad Hoeir Office. During office hours the mikvah is accessible by way of the Vaad office door. At other times, the Mikvah is accessible through a rear door, using the combination lock code of aleph, gimmel, hay. Please call the Vaad office at 314-569-2770, ext 14, for further details.

**MICROWAVE OVENS:** A microwave oven which is used during the year should not be used on Pesach.

**REGULAR OVENS:** Regular ovens are kashered by '**libun**', a process for burning away any chometz. First, clean the oven with Easy-Off, then don't use it for 24 hours, and finally, turn on the oven for at least one hour. Some Rabbis suggest longer; speak to **Rabbi Smason** for details.

## Foods for Pesach

**BAKERY ITEMS:** Schnuck's and Dierberg's Bakeries **do not bake for pesach!!** All macaroons that are made before Pesach by local bakers **cannot be used during pesach.**

**VEGETABLES:** Vegetables that may be used on Pesach are: fresh beets, squash, peppers, potatoes, radishes, scallions, spinach, cabbage, carrots, celery, tomatoes, garlic, lettuce, turnips, zucchini, mushrooms, parsnips and onions. **NOTE:** On the nights of the **Seders**, according to some customs, only the following vegetables may be used: celery, lettuce, onions & potatoes.

**KITNYOS:** Kitnyos is the Hebrew word for legumes. During Passover, Kitnyos has taken on a broader meaning. The rabbis of the Talmud decided that, in addition to chometz, kitniyos should not be eaten on Pesach, at least by Ashkenazic Jews. **Kitniyos now** includes the following: beans, green beans, peanuts, peas, corn, rice, sesame seeds, caraway seeds, sunflower seeds, soybeans and tofu. It also includes the following ingredients: ascorbic acid, BHT, BHA (in corn oil), calcium ascorbate, citric acid, confectioner's sugar, corn dextrose, emulsifiers, flavors (may also be chometz), glucose, hydrolyzed vegetable protein (may also be chometz), isolated soy protein, isomerized syrup, lecithin, malto-dextrin, mustard flour, sodium ascorbate, sodium erythorbate, sorbitan, sorbitol, stabilizers, starch (may also be chometz). Ask Rabbi Smason if you have any questions.

**MEDICATIONS:** See the Vaad Hoer Pesach Guide for lists of medications and cosmetics on its web page <https://indd.adobe.com/view/0f9907ec-576e-4fca-bea7-f815d0fb17e7>

## Mechiras Chometz – Selling Chometz

All non-Pesach food that cannot be eaten before Pesach can be sold to a non-Jew. Rabbi Smason will be available to act as your agent for the selling of chometz. It is customary to make a donation when you sell Chometz. *Please bring or send your check payable to NHBZ with the notation 'Selling Chometz' to our office.* **Chometz must be sold by Friday, March 30, by 7:45 am. You can sell your chometz in the following ways:**

**IN PERSON WITH RABBI SMASON:** If you want to sell your chometz by designating Rabbi Smason as your agent, please call him at the office to make an appointment or speak with him at minyan.

**BY EMAIL:** Send an email to Rabbi Smason at [pepshort613@gmail.com](mailto:pepshort613@gmail.com) that contains the following text: 'I hereby authorize Rabbi Ze'ev Smason to act as my agent to sell my chometz and rent the space where chometz is stored for the entire Passover, beginning Friday night, March 30.'

**BY TELEPHONE:** Call Jeff at the shul office, 314-991-2100, ext. 2 (before Noon on Wednesday, March 28), or call Rabbi Smason on his cell phone, 314-749-5271, and we will add your name to the list. Please call Rabbi Smason no later than **Friday, March 30, by 7:45 am.**

## Bedikas Chametz (Search for Chometz)

The search for chometz takes place on **Thursday night, March 29, after 8:07 p.m.** Place **ten** pieces of chometz (such as pieces of bread) in rooms where food is usually eaten during the year. Recite the following blessing **before** the search, gather the chometz with a feather and wooden spoon, by the light of a candle, and place the pieces of chometz into a paper bag. This is found in Hebrew at the beginning of most Haggadahs.

Bo-ruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olom  
A-sher Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sov Ve-tzi-vo-nu Al Bee-ur Cho-metz.

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us by His commandments, and has commanded us concerning the removal of *chametz*.

After the search, recite the following declaration.

Kol chamira v'chamia d'ika virshuti, d'la chamitay oodla viartay oodla y'dana lay libatale v'lehevay he'kare k'afra d'ara

Any chometz or leaven which is in my possession, which I have neither seen nor removed, and about which I am unaware, shall be considered nullified and ownerless as the dust of the earth.

## **Erev Pesach - Passover is Here!**

**TANNIS B'CHORIM (FAST OF THE FIRSTBORN) – SIYUM:** The **Torah** relates that the first born Egyptians were slain during the tenth plague, but the first born Jews were saved. It is therefore customary for the first born (B'Chorim) to fast on Erev Pesach in thanksgiving to **G-d**. The Rabbis have ruled, however, anyone attending a Siyum - the completion of the study of a book of the Talmud - is permitted to partake of food served in honor of the Siyum. Hence, the firstborn are exempt from fasting by attending the Siyum following morning minyan at the Shul on **Friday morning, March 30**. Services begin at 7:00 a.m.

**CHOMETZ MAY NOT BE EATEN** after 10:36 am on Friday morning, March 30.

**BIYUR CHOMETZ (BURNING OF CHOMETZ):** The burning of all chometz that has not been consumed or sold, together with the pieces of bread from the search, the feather, spoon and candle should take place on **Friday morning, March 30, by 11:50 a.m.** After the burning of chometz, we recite statement of nullification in which we renounce the ownership of chametz. This formula is found in Hebrew at the beginning of most Haggadahs.

Kol chamira v'hamia d'ika virshuti dachazitay oodla hazitay, dachamitay oola chamitay, d'viartay oodla viartay libatale v'lehevay he'kare k'afra d'ara

Any chometz or leaven which is in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have seen it or not, shall be considered nullified and ownerless as the dust of the earth.

## **Candle Lighting**

We light candles on the two Seder nights, and the last two evenings of Passover. See the last page of this newsletter for candle-lighting times. On the first two nights of Passover, we recite both of the following blessings. On the last two nights, we recite only the first blessing. See the schedule at the end of this newsletter for candle lighting times. The blessings are found in Hebrew at the beginning of most Haggadahs.

1. Bo-ruch a-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ho-olom a-sher ki-de-sha-nu be-mitz-vo-sov ve-tzi-vo-nu le-had-lik ner shel (Sha-bos v'shel ) Yom Tov.

Blessed are you, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and has commanded us to kindle the light of (the Sabbath and) Yom Tov.

2. Bo-ruch a-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ho-olom she-he-che-ya-nu vi-kee-yi-ma-nu vi-hi-gee-an-u liz-man ha-zeh.

Blessed are you, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has kept us alive and sustained us and let us reach this time.

## The Seder

**SEDER TIMES:** In order to celebrate the Pesach Seder at the traditional time, Kiddush and the Seder should not begin until after nightfall, after 8:07 p.m. on Friday evening, March 30, and after 8:08 p.m. on Saturday, March 31. Check with Rabbi Smason about children and senior citizens who need to eat at earlier times.

**THE HAGGADAH:** The Haggadah should be read and the melodies should be chanted by all members of the family, preferably in Hebrew, but if not, certainly it should be read in English. It is a mitzvah to retell the story of the Exodus and the history of Pesach.

**KIDDUSH:** We recite Kiddush and drink 4 cups of wine at the Seder, reminding us of the 4 expressions of deliverance found in the Torah. Kosher wines that we recommend are **Kedem and Manischewitz** with an OU-P hechsher.

**SEDER PLATE:** Use the diagram at the beginning of most Haggadahs to set up the Seder plate.

**PARTICIPATE IN THE SEDER:** Give everyone the opportunity to participate in the Seder. If you have any questions concerning Pesach, or the Seder, do not hesitate to call **Rabbi Smason**.

## After the Seder

**SEPHIRAS HAOMER (Counting the Omer):** Beginning with the 2nd night of Pesach, and continuing for 49 nights, we count the Omer, in accord with the Biblical injunction: *From the Morrow of Pesach, From the Day of Your Bringing the Omer, You Shall Count Seven Full Weeks.* An omer is a unit of measure. On the second day of Passover, in the days of the Temple, an omer of barley was cut down and brought to the Temple as an offering. This grain offering was referred to as the Omer. The counting of the Omer must take place after nightfall. Immediately before stating the daily and weekly number in the Omer, we recite the blessing *Al Sephirat HaOmer*. The 49 days link the festival of Pesach, the celebration of our physical redemption, with the festival of Shavuos, which occurs on the 50th day, when we celebrate our spiritual redemption, the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. This period is a time of partial mourning, during which weddings, parties, and joyful events are not conducted, in memory of a plague during the lifetime of Rabbi Akiba that killed 24,000 of his students. Haircuts during this time are also forbidden.

**ERUV TAVSHILIN:** When the first or second day of Yom Tov falls on Friday, we must make an Eruv Tavshilin (mingling of cooked foods) in order to prepare food for Shabbos during Yom Tov. This year, the 7<sup>th</sup> day of Pesach falls on **Friday, April 6**.

According to Jewish Law, we may cook on Yom Tov, *but only for that day, and not for the following day.* The Rabbis instituted the Eruv Tavshilin to prepare for Shabbos during Yom Tov. If you begin preparing for Shabbos on the day **before** Yom Tov begins, then you can *continue* the preparation for *Shabbos on Yom Tov itself*.

Therefore, on the day before Yom Tov, **Thursday, April 6**, cook a hard-boiled egg, and set it aside with a piece of bread or matzo as the beginning of preparations for the Shabbos following Yom Tov. Hold these 'eruv-foods' and recite the following prayer and declaration:

Baruch ata Ado-noi Elo-heinu melech ha-olam, Asher kid-shanu bi-mitzvo-tav, Vi-tzee-vanu al mitzvot eruv.

Blessed are You, the Lord our God, King of the universe, Who sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us in the mitzvah of iruv.

Following the blessing, a declaration must be made describing the purpose of the *eruv* foods. This declaration is traditionally said in Aramaic, but it must be said in a language that one understands. So, if one does not understand the Aramaic words, he should say the following translation:

By means of these eruv foods, we will be permitted to bake, cook, keep foods warm, light candles, carry, and do all that we need on Yom Tov for Shabbat.

The eruv-foods are set aside and eaten on Shabbos. For more details, call Rabbi Smason.

**THE LAST TWO DAYS OF PASSOVER - YIZKOR:** The seventh and eighth days of Passover are celebrated as Yom Tov. Like other Yomim Tovim, we do no work, other than certain acts connected to food preparation, we recite holiday prayers, and light candles on the eve of both days. The seventh day of Passover commemorates the crossing of the Sea of Reeds. During morning services on the eighth day, we recite Yizkor memorial prayers for departed relatives.

**SEUDAT MOSHIACH (FEAST OF THE MESSIAH):** The eighth day of Pesach is traditionally associated with our hopes for the coming of the Messiah. The Baal Shem Tov remarked that on the last day of Passover, the rays of the messianic redemption are already shining bright. At NHBZ we observe this by escorting the conclusion of the holiday with a festive gathering of song, food, and words of Torah that have inspired us over the course of the holiday. The Seudat Moshiach will take place after Mincha, as part of Shalosh Seudas, at 6:30 pm on **Shabbos, April 7**. All men and women invited -- please join us!

**LAG B'OMER:** refers to the 33rd day of the counting of the Omer. It is a happy day commemorating the end of the plague that killed 24,000 students of Rabbi Akiva. The sages of Israel declared a mourning period of 33 days, between Pesach and Shavuot. However, festivities are permitted on Lag B'Omer, which occurs this year on **Thursday, May 3**. Haircuts and weddings are permitted on Lag B'Omer. Ask Rabbi Smason about customs following Lag B'Omer.

## **Shavuot**

The holiday of Shavuot is a two-day holiday, beginning at sundown of the 5th of Sivan and lasting until nightfall of the 7th of Sivan (May 20-21). The word *Shavuot* means 'weeks.' It marks the completion of the seven-week period of counting the Omer that started on the second night of Passover. On Shavuot, G-d gave the Torah to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai. Every year on Shavuot we renew our acceptance of G-d's gift, and G-d 're-gives' the Torah. The giving of the Torah was a far-reaching spiritual event—one that touched the essence of the Jewish soul for all times. Our sages have compared it to a wedding between G-d and the Jewish people. *Shavuot* also means 'oaths,' for on this day G-d swore eternal devotion to us, and we in turn pledged everlasting loyalty to Him.



## NHBZ Pesach Schedule 2018

**\* All Pesach Kiddushim are co-sponsored by the NHBZ Sisterhood**

### Thursday, March 29

Shacharis.....7:00 am  
Bedikas Chometz (Search) ..... After 7:00 pm

### Friday, March 30, Erev Pesach

Shacharis.....7:00 am  
Siyum for First Born Following Shacharis  
Mechiras Chometz (Selling) ..... **by 7:45 am**  
Finish Eating Chometz..... 10:36 am  
Biyur Chometz (Burning)..... by 11:50 am  
Bitul Chometz (Annulling)..... by 11:50 am  
Mincha/Maariv ..... 7:00 pm  
Candle Lighting Yom Tov..... 7:04 pm  
First Seder .....after 8:07 pm

### Shabbos, March 31, 1st Day of Pesach

Shacharis .....9:00 am  
**Sermon by Rabbi Ze'ev Smason**  
**Kiddush sponsored by \***  
**Jeff & Murray Baker and**  
**Jesse & Debbie Barash**  
Mincha/Maariv .....7:05 pm  
Candle Lighting & Second Seder ..... After 8:08 pm

### Sunday, April 1, 2nd Day of Pesach

Shacharis.....9:00 am  
**Kiddush sponsored by \***  
**Irwin & Rosalind Rosen,**  
**Marvin & Jackie Gitel, and**  
**Scott & Leslie Gitel**  
**No sermon**  
Mincha .....7:05 pm  
Yom Tov Concludes.....8:09 pm

### Monday – Thursday, April 2–5 Chol Hamoed

Shacharis .....6:45 am  
Mincha/Maariv.....7:00 pm

### Thursday, April 5, Chol Hamoed -Erev Yom Tov

Make Eruv Tavshilin  
Mincha/Maariv.....7:00 pm  
Candle Lighting Erev Yom Tov .....7:10 pm

### Friday, April 6, 7th Day of Pesach

Shacharis .....9:00 am  
**Sermon by Rabbi Ze'ev Smason**  
**Kiddush sponsored by \***  
**Ron & Ina Makovsky and Dr Milton Tofle**  
Mincha/Maariv.....7:00 pm  
Candle Lighting for Shabbos & Yom Tov.....7:11 pm

### Shabbos, April 7, 8th Day of Pesach (Yizkor)

Shacharis .....9:00 am  
**Sermon by Rabbi Ze'ev Smason**  
**Yizkor ..... 10:30 am**  
**Kiddush sponsored by \***  
**Sam & Shirley Bluestein and**  
**Stan & Rhonnie Goldfader**  
Mincha/Seudat Moshiach/Maariv .....6:30 pm  
Pesach Concludes.....8:15 pm

***Important Note: before eating chometz, you must wait for at least one hour after Pesach concludes, until 9:15 pm, so that the rabbis have time to buy back your chometz & until pesach utensils are put away.***

