

What You Need for Passover at Home



*Netivyah wishes you a happy
and meaningful Pesach!*

Pesach in a Nutshell

Pesach (also called: '**Passover**' or '**the Feast of Unleavened Bread**') is the celebration of redemption and freedom, as we commemorate the journey from slavery to God's salvation, by retelling the miraculous Exodus from Egyptian slavery over 3000 years ago. A key Jewish commandment for the Seder is that each person should see themselves as if they personally came out of Egypt and experienced God's miracles.

Pesach opens the Biblical new year, and is one of the most important Jewish holidays, that begins with the traditional meal called 'Seder Pesach' on the nightfall of Passover on the 15th day of the month '**Nisan**.' In the diaspora, outside of Israel, a second night is added. The word 'seder' means 'order,' and refers to the traditional order we follow to properly celebrate Pesach throughout generations with a booklet called '**Haggadah**'.



PASSOVER LAMB

The Hebrew word '**Pesach**' refers to the angel of death 'passing over' the Hebrew homes that had put the blood of a lamb without blemish on their doorposts (*Exodus 12:12-13*). In the New Testament, Yeshua is identified as the ultimate Passover Lamb. John the Baptist saw Yeshua and said: "*Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*" (*John 1:29*). This proclamation sets the stage for understanding Yeshua's sacrificial role.

Paul explicitly connects Yeshua to the Passover lamb: "*For Messiah, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.*" (*1 Corinthians 5:7*) Here, Paul emphasizes the purity and sacrificial nature of the Messiah, paralleling the requirements of the Passover lamb in Exodus.

UNLEAVENED BREAD

We're commanded to eat unleavened bread (or: '**matzah**') and remove all leaven from our homes (*Exodus 12:14-15, 13:3-16*), as a reminder of the haste with which the Hebrews left Egypt. This is also why the weeks leading up to Pesach are used to clean our home (and car, if relevant) from '**chametz**'.

CHAMETZ

The word chametz refers to any food product made from barley, rye, oats, wheat, or spelt (which can be remembered using the acronym b.r.o.w.s. like in the word '**eyebrows**') that has come into contact with water and been allowed to ferment and rise. Note that Ashkenazi Jews also refrain from eating the following foods during Pesach: rice, corn, millet, and certain legumes like beans, peas, lentils, and peanuts (in addition to the 5 grains mentioned).

Passover Cleaning

Cleaning our home for Pesach is a great reminder of the Exodus. It's more than just a fun tradition and goes beyond a good spring cleaning. Cleaning doesn't only refer to the physical act of cleaning, as leaven can be a symbol of becoming bloated, related to ego or arrogance: *"Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Messiah, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed."* Notice how the next verse naturally continues with the call for us to *"therefore celebrate the festival (...)." (1 Corinthians 5:6-8)*

May this year's Pesach cleaning be an opportunity to be mindful of both our external and internal **'dust and clutter.'** As we physically clear out the leaven in our homes, may we also clear out the spiritual leaven from our hearts.

TEACHING THE NEXT GENERATION

Throughout generations, we repeat the same stories and songs, and prepare meaningful dishes that help us remember Israel's history and God's faithfulness. The Seder also serves as a valuable educational tool for teaching the next generation, to preserve our collective memory. Children hold a special place during Seder Pesach, and they sing songs like **'Ma Nishtana'** (meaning: What is different [about this night from all other nights]) and search for the **'afikomen,'** a piece of matzah hidden for them to find. There's a fun custom to give a small gift to the child who finds the afikomen.

The Search for Chametz ('Bedikat Chametz')

Whatever your pre-Pesach cleaning practice, there's an interactive custom called **'bedikat chametz'** (or: **'the search for chametz'**) that kids will love. This ancient custom is performed when it gets dark on the night before Pesach.

SUPPLIES:

- * leftover chametz like bread
- * few pieces of paper towel
- * flashlight

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. When the kids aren't around, tear off a few small pieces of bread and wrap each piece in paper towel. Hide each piece in its own spot in the dining room, living room, or another room. (You might want to write down the hiding spots so as not to forget any.)
2. Before the hunt begins, gather your family and say this blessing:

**Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu al biyur chametz.**

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ, וְצִוֵּנוּ עַל בְּעוּר חָמֵץ

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the removal of chametz.

3. Use the flashlight to search. You can offer clues as needed.
4. Each time the kids find a piece, have them deliver the piece to an adult collector. When all the pieces have been found, we set them aside for the next morning.
5. The following morning of the 14th of Nisan, no later than 10 A.M., the leaven is burned

(in a miniature bonfire, fire pit or grill). This observance is called 'bi'ur chametz', which is the removal or the burning of chametz. The following words are recited in a language that's understood by everyone present:

Kol chametz u-se'or she-yesh bi-rshuti, she-re'itiv ve-shelo re'itiv, she-bi'artiv ve-shelo bi'artiv, yivatel ve-yehei hefker ke-afar ha-aretz.

כָּל חֶמֶץ וְשְׂאֹר שֵׁישׁ בְּרִשׁוּתִי, שְׂרָאִיתִיו וְשֵׁלֹא רָאִיתִיו, שְׁבַעְרָתִיו וְשֵׁלֹא בַעְרָתִיו, יִבָּטֵל וְיִהְיֶה הַפְּקָר כְּעֶפֶר הָאָרֶץ

All chametz and leaven in my possession that I have seen and that I have not seen, that I have destroyed and that I have not destroyed, shall be nullified and become ownerless, like the dust of the earth.

Seder Pesach: What's Needed?



- * four cups of wine or grape juice (per person);
- * a bowl of saltwater to dip vegetables in (which reminds us of Israel's tears);
- * matzah (flat, dry cracker-like bread), covered with a nice cover;
- * a bowl, pitcher and towel for washing hands during the traditional meal;
- * gift for the finder of the 'afikomen'
- * a Haggadah: a foundational Jewish text that lays out the order of the '**Seder Pesach**'. The original text is in Hebrew (with a bit of Aramaic), but it's perfectly acceptable to use a translated Haggadah if you don't understand Hebrew.
- * a Pesach Plate
- * a festive (chametz-free) dinner that usually contains time-honored favorites, such as matzah ball soup and leg of lamb.
- * traditionally, a seat and a wine cup are reserved for Elijah

THE PESACH PLATE*

At the center of every Pesach table is a special '**Pesach plate**' (6 small bowls could serve as an alternative), with a spot for each of the 6 traditional ingredients that are necessary for the Passover meal (click here for more in depth-information about these 6 Pesach Plate-dishes:

[Click here to read more](#)

- * Matzah (unleavened bread)
- * Beitzah (hard-boiled egg)
- * Zeroa (shankbone)
- * Maror & Chazeret: Bitter Herbs.
- * Charoset (a sweet mixture made of apples or dates)
- * Karpas (parsley or celery)



CLASSIC ASHKENAZI CHAROSET

- 3 green apples, peeled and grated
- ½ cup raisins, washed
- ½ cup walnuts, finely chopped
- ¼ cup grape juice (optional)
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup or brown sugar (optional)

Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Add maple syrup, sugar, and lemon juice to balance the flavors.



CHAROSET RECIPE OF THE IRAQI JEWISH COMMUNITY:

- ½ cup 'silan' (date honey)
- 200g walnuts, finely ground into crumbs

Mix the ingredients together.

BEITZAH (egg)

Boil an egg until it is hard (about 10 minutes).

ZEROAH (shankbone)

[Click here to read more](#)

This is typically a cooked and browned shank bone, chicken leg bone, or chicken neck. The choice of bone depends on the main dish being prepared. Sephardic Jews tend to use a leg of lamb, while Ashkenazi Jews often use chicken, following incidents in medieval European history.

CHAZERET AND MAROR (Bitter Herbs)

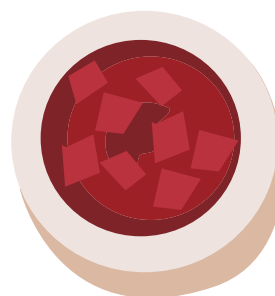
The Bible mentions 'bitter herbs' in plural, which is why two types of bitter herbs appear on the Seder plate:

CHAZERET (Horseradish)

- 7–8 oz horseradish root, peeled and cut into large cubes
- 1–2 small raw beets, peeled and cut into large cubes
- ½ cup red wine or apple cider vinegar
- 2–3 tablespoons sugar
- ½–1 teaspoon salt

Place the horseradish cubes and beets into a food processor and grind them to a fine consistency. Add vinegar, sugar, and salt to taste. Store in a glass jar or airtight container and refrigerate for a few hours to allow the flavors to meld.

Alternatively, you can simply peel pieces of raw horseradish root to use during the Seder.



MAROR

Traditionally, Romaine lettuce is used for Maror. In earlier times, wild lettuce was more bitter than it is today.

KARPAS (Celery or Parsley)

Karpas represents spring and renewal. Before eating it, we dip the vegetable into a bowl of saltwater, symbolizing the tears shed by the Children of Israel during their enslavement in Egypt.



May we all clean our hearts and homes from leaven and be joyous.

Have a happy and meaningful Passover!

With love from the Netivyah staff