



# ד"ב Laws & Customs: Nissan & Pesach

For the year 5782

According to Minhag Chabad

By Rabbi Leshes (With minor comments by Rabbi LY Garelik)

Comments or questions: [rabbi@youngyeshiva.com.au](mailto:rabbi@youngyeshiva.com.au)

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## THIRTY DAYS PRIOR TO PESACH

From *Purim* onward, one should **learn** and become fluent in the *Halachos* of *Pesach*. Since an inspiring *Pesach* is the product of diligent preparation, one should learn *Maamarim* which focus on its inner dimension.

**Matzah is not eaten.** However, until the end-time for eating *Chometz* on *Erev Pesach*, one may eat *Matzah*-like crackers which are really *Chometz* or egg-*Matzah*. One may also eat *Matzah* balls or foods containing *Matzah* meal. One may also be lenient for children below the age of *Chinuch*.

During these days, *Chometz* should not be scattered in a manner that would make it hard to clean and remove before *Pesach*, or that would allow it to go unnoticed before *Pesach*.

One should give **Maos Chittim** and provide all the *Pesach* needs (including food and clothing) of the poor. [For Melbourne, please donate at [mjcf.com.au](http://mjcf.com.au).]

One should participate in **Mivtza Matzah**, ensuring that every Jew has round hand-made *Shmurah*-*Matzah* for *Pesach* (or at least for the *Seder*) and attends a *Seder*. Suitable arrangements should be made for Jewish servicemen, as well those in hospitals, aged-care facilities or jail.

Before *Pesach*, all children should be given the opportunity to attend a **model-Seder**. [It should be conducted in a manner that will not conflict with the respective family *Minhagim* of the children in attendance.]

**Mechiras Chometz:** Every Jew should be encouraged to sell his *Chometz*, even if there is concern that he will consume it on *Pesach*. [Obviously, such a person should be educated not to use it.]

Those with travel plans should ensure that they will be able to observe *Pesach* properly without relaxing any standards. One should avoid the International Dateline on the return journey so as not to impact one's *Sefiras Haomer*. [Alert: Polar flight routes can be equally, if not more, problematic. Guidance should be sought from a *Rav* familiar with these matters.]

See below more details in the "Mechiras Chometz" section.

## MONTH OF NISSAN

**Tachnun** is not recited the entire month. Similarly, *Av Harachamim* and *Tzidkosecha* are omitted each *Shabbos*.

The **Nossi** is recited each of the first twelve days of *Nissan*, followed by the *Yehi Ratzon* printed in the *Siddur*. It is recited even by a *Kohen* and *Levi*. On the thirteenth day, one recites the selection from "Zos *Chanukas Hamizbeach*" until "Kein *Assah es Hamenorah*", but without reciting the *Yehi Ratzon*.

One may **not fast** during *Nissan*, except a *Chosson* and *Kallah* on their wedding day, who fast even on *Rosh Chodesh Nissan*.

During the month of *Nissan*, one recites the applicable *Brocho* when seeing blossoming **fruit-trees** for the first time. This *Brocho* is not recited in the Southern Hemisphere.

**Haircuts** may be taken only until *Erev Pesach* (see further).

## SHABBOS HAGADOL (8 NISSAN)

Although the *Haftorah* of *V'arva* is not recited unless *Shabbos* coincides with *Erev Pesach*, one should nevertheless recite it along with the regular *Haftorah* when reading *Shnayim Mikrah v'Echad Targum*.

One attends a *Shabbos Hagadol Drosho* about the practical *Halachos* of *Pesach*.

After *Mincha*, the *Haggadah* is read from "Avadim *Hayinu*" until "L'chaper *Al Kol Avoinoseinu*".

On *Motzei Shabbos*, *Vihi Noam* and *V'atah Kaddosh* are recited.

## CLEANING AWAY THE CHOMETZ

It is improper to complain about the work and effort required in preparing for *Pesach*.

One should remember to clean or discard any *Chometz* found in the "less obvious" locations such as vacuum cleaners, brooms, mops, floor ducts, kitchen walls, car interiors (including rented cars), car-seats, baby carriages, highchairs (the tray should also be lined), briefcases, pocketbooks, phones, mobile devices, computer keyboards and other devices commonly handled when eating.

Items regularly used around *Chometz* (e.g. cookbooks, *Bentchers*, *Siddurim* and *Kvorts*) must be stored with the *Chometz* that is sold for *Pesach*. *Seforim* and toys should be cleaned well or included in *Mechiras Chometz*. Some play items such as plasticine may contain *Chometz* and must be included in *Mechiras Chometz*.

Tablecloths or napkins should not be used if they were starched with a substance that may contain *Chometz*. One should also ensure that starched clothing does not come into contact with food.

*Shabbos* candlesticks should be cleaned thoroughly. If the usual tray will be used on *Pesach*, it should be cleaned well and covered in foil. No food should be placed on the candlestick tray on *Pesach*.

Rubbish bins should be thoroughly cleaned. Council bins should also be cleaned; alternatively, before the end time of *Bior Chometz*, they should be placed in the public domain for the entire *Pesach*, with the bin and its contents deemed ownerless.

New toothbrushes should be prepared for *Pesach*.

A *Rav* should be consulted regarding the use of vitamins and medicines (taken orally) which may contain *Chometz*.

Pet food must be *Chometz*-free but may contain *Kitniyos*. Cages, enclosures and feeding bowls must be thoroughly cleaned.

It is not necessary to clean behind or under heavy furniture rarely moved, as long as there are no plans to move it on *Pesach* itself. [Even if one knows for certain that there is *Chometz* there, one may include it in the *Mechiras Chometz*.]

## KASHERING

It is customary to avoid *Kashering* utensils where possible, and to instead use utensils designated exclusively for *Pesach*. [If *Kashering* is performed, it should be done under the guidance of one who is well versed in the relevant *Halachos*.]

Dishwashers, regular ovens, continuous-cleaning ovens, toaster ovens, microwave ovens, grills and BBQs are not *Kashered* and used for *Pesach*. Self-cleaning ovens which reach approximately 480°C/900°F may be *Kashered* by running it through a full clean cycle; the oven door and seals should be cleaned well beforehand.

For gas cooktops, the grates are *Kashered* through *Libbun Gommur* (heating the grates until they glow red-hot in the dark). The burners, drip-trays and cooktop surface beneath the grates are *Kashered* by cleaning them thoroughly, after which *Libbun Kal* (heating the metal until the other side is hot enough to scorch paper) is performed. One way to achieve all of this is by turning all the burners on the highest and covering the entire cooktop with a *Blech* until the grates glow red-hot, by which time the other components of the cooktop will have reached the heat of *Libbun Kal*. [Do not leave the stove unattended when *Kashering* with this method, and ensure adequate ventilation.]

For standard electric cooktops (where the burner coils are exposed), the coils are *Kashered* through *Libbun Gommur* (turning them onto the highest setting until they glow red-hot), while the burners, drip-trays and cooktop surface are *Kashered* by cleaning them thoroughly, after which *Libbun Kal* is performed.

If the cooktop surface cannot be *Kashered* through *Libbun Kal* (e.g. if made of glass or enamel), it may instead be covered with a durable and heat-proof covering or lining.

Cooktop knobs and backsplashes should be cleaned and lined with foil.

Induction cooktops and electric smoothtops (where the burner coils lie beneath a flat ceramic glass surface) are not *Kashered* and used for *Pesach*.

Wooden or laminate tabletops and countertops are *Kashered* by cleaning them thoroughly (including crevices) and waiting 24 hours. Then, after ensuring that the surface is thoroughly dry, one pours boiling water from a kettle that has just been removed from the source of heat, ensuring that the flow of water from the kettle to the entire surface is direct and uninterrupted.

Stone countertops are *Kashered* similarly, but the boiling water is poured over an *Even Meluban* (red-hot stone) which is moved around (or right above) the entire surface as the water is poured over it. The *Even Meluban* remains effective as long as it causes the boiling water to bubble.

Metal countertops and sinks are *Kashered* with boiling water and an *Even Meluban*, in the manner described above. The water should be poured over the lowest surfaces first, before moving upward. Alternatively, they may be *Kashered* through *Libbun Kal* (blowtorching until the other side of the metal is hot enough to scorch paper).

Metal faucets and faucet handles are *Kashered* by pouring boiling water (in the manner described above for tabletops and counters). The hot tap-water should be turned on and running through the interior of the faucet at the time that the exterior is being *Kashered*. Bleach should be poured down the sink drain and onto any crevices between the sink and the sink drain. Any tap filters, aerators, strainers and sponges should be replaced.

The kettle used to boil the water for *Kashering* is customarily reserved for this purpose alone, and is used neither with the *Chometz* nor with the *Pesach* cooking.

If a tabletop or countertop will be damaged by *Kashering*, or is made of a material that cannot be *Kashered*, one should cover it well instead, ensuring that no liquid is trapped beneath.

After *Kashering*, all countertops, backsplashes, tables and cooktop surfaces should be lined or covered. Sinks should also be lined or fitted with sink inserts.

Fans, hoods and other areas above stoves and ovens should be cleaned and ideally covered due to the steam that circulates when cooking.

A separate *Blech* and urn is used for *Pesach*.

Pantries, cupboards, shelves, fridges and freezers (defrosted first) should be thoroughly cleaned with a cleaning agent, and then lined. The fridge/freezer rubber door seals should be cleaned as well, and the interior circulation vents should not be blocked, so as not to cause damage.

### 🌀 MECHIRAS CHOMETZ

*Mechiras Chometz* is effective only if one truly commits to sell his *Chometz* in an unconditional and absolute sale. It is therefore customary to perform a *Kinyan* (act of acquisition) when authorising the Rav to sell the *Chometz*. [However, this *Kinyan* is not an absolute requirement.]

*Mechiras Chometz* must occur before the end time of *Biur Chometz* on *Erev Pesach*. However, it is preferable to visit the Rav before the night of *Bedikas Chometz*. Practically, one should not wait until then, and instead go at the earliest opportunity.

When the householder sells the *Chometz*, his dependents (who dwell with him permanently) do not need to, unless they own *Chometz* independently.

*Chometz* belonging to a *Shule* or public organization should be sold by the office-bearer responsible for finances.

In the sale, one includes all *Chometz* and *Chometz* utensils. Since the actual location of the *Chometz* is also leased to the non-Jew, one should list the full address of each of his personal and business properties, including common-owned properties, preferably concluding with the words "and wherever my *Chometz* may be found".

If one owns *Chometz* in a different time-zone, or is travelling to a different time-zone for *Pesach*, he should inform the Rav of his situation for further guidance.

If one is away from home for the entire *Pesach*: If he arrives at his destination before the night of *Bedikas Chometz*, he includes his entire home in the *Mechiras Chometz*. If he will still be at home the night of *Bedikas Chometz*, he includes most of his home in *Mechiras Chometz*, but excludes a small area so that he can conduct *Bedikas Chometz* (see "*Bedikas Chometz*" section).

### 🌀 KITNIYOS

*Kitniyos* (legumes) are not eaten on *Pesach*. Common examples include rice, millet,

buckwheat, corn, peas, beans, lentils, sesame seeds, mustard, chickpeas, peanuts, soy and soybeans, tofu, sunflower and poppy seeds. It is best to avoid quinoa, as their status is unclear.

*Kitniyos* derived oils are not used, such as canola, corn, peanut, safflower, sesame, sunflower, soybean (often labelled as vegetable oil) or rapeseed (flaxseed) oils. The status of cottonseed oil is debated, but it is generally regarded as non-*Kitniyos*.

*Kitniyos* may be used when necessary for the sick, infirm or babies (e.g. infant formulas and nutritional supplements). However, designated utensils should be used, and they should be kept separate from the rest of the *Pesach* utensils.

One may own and derive benefit from *Kitniyos* on *Pesach* (such as to feed pets).

If *Kitniyos* **inadvertently** fell into another food item on *Pesach*, it is nullified if the mixture contains more non-*Kitniyos* than *Kitniyos*. Such a mixture can be consumed even if it has a pronounced taste of *Kitniyos*, as long as no piece of *Kitniyos* is visually discernible. Nevertheless, it is common practice not to eat any item containing even a trace of *Kitniyos*.

### 🌀 PREVALENT CHUMROS

The *Arizal* stressed the importance of observing *Chumros* on *Pesach*. The following practices are prevalent in *Chabad* circles, the specifics of which may vary from family to family:

- To peel or shell all fruits, vegetables and nuts before use.
- Not to eat leafy vegetables which can't be peeled (besides romaine lettuce).
- To have a special pot exclusively for boiling eggs.
- To boil and strain sugar before *Pesach*.
- Not to eat commercially prepared foods (besides *Matzah*, wine, meat and/or oil).
- Not to use spices.
- To use coarse salt and not fine salt.
- Not to eat garlic and radishes.
- Not to use food that fell on the floor. (If peelable, one may peel it).
- To thoroughly wash any utensil that fell on the floor, or to set it aside and not use it until the following *Pesach*.
- Not to drink any alcoholic beverages other than wine.
- Not to eat food prepared outside one's own home.
- Some do not eat dairy foods.
- Some do not drink tea or coffee.
- Some do not use potato starch.
- To cook as much as possible prior to *Pesach*, since a speck of *Chometz* that is inadvertently mixed in becomes nullified then, unlike on *Pesach* itself.