

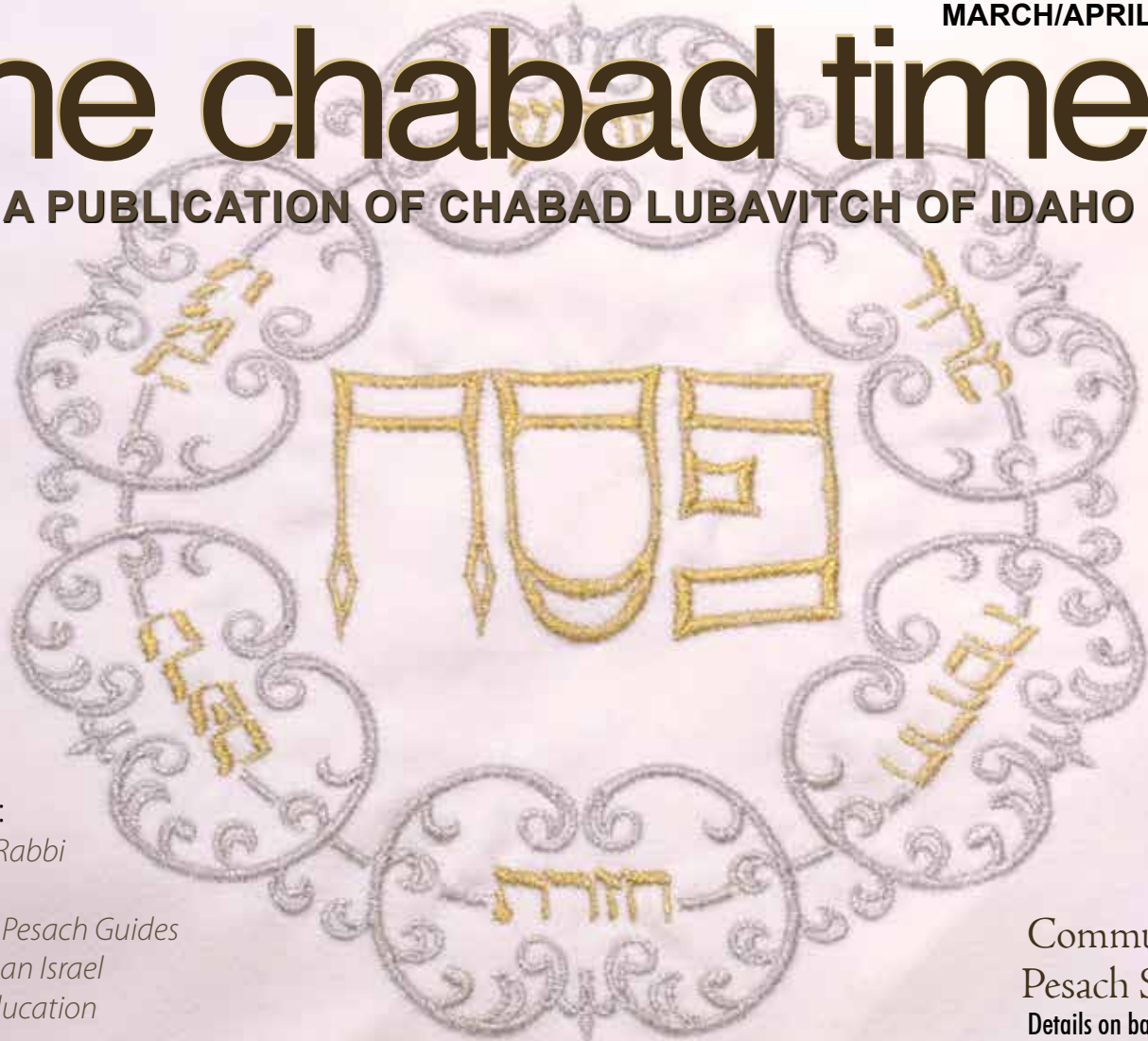
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בס"ד

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MARCH/APRIL 2016

# the chabad times

A PUBLICATION OF CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF IDAHO



**INSIDE:**

*Ask the Rabbi*  
*Photos*  
*Purim & Pesach Guides*  
*Camp Gan Israel*  
*Adult Education*  
*& More!*

Community  
Pesach Seder  
Details on back cover

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Pesach appeal!

See envelope inside.



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Matzah cover with matzah

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# A WORD FROM THE DIRECTORS



Dear Friend,

Heinrich Heine, the 19th century German poet, once remarked, "Since the Exodus, freedom has always spoken with a Hebrew accent."

Indeed, the Pesach story is a powerful tale of emancipation, one that has left an indelible mark on history and given birth to our people.

Each year, at the Passover Seder, we relive the Exodus from Egypt. Through prayer, study and ritual we are transported to a time bygone, yet still alive. The special Pesach foods help us re-experience the newfound liberty of our ancestors.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Britain's Former Chief Rabbi, notes that we read in Haggadah about the Pesach lamb, the matzah and the bitter herbs. The Pesach lamb, a food of luxury, symbolizes freedom. The bitter herbs represent slavery due to their sharp taste. The matzah combines both. It was the bread the Israelites ate in Egypt as slaves. It was also the bread they took when leaving Egypt as free people.

It is not just the symbolism, but also the order these items are spoken about in the Haggadah that is interesting. First we speak of the Pesach lamb, then the matzah and finally the bitter herbs.

But this seems strange. Why do the symbols of freedom precede those of slavery? Surely slavery preceded freedom so it would be more logical to talk of the bitter herbs first?

The answer, according to the Chassidic teachers, is that only a free human people does slavery taste bitter. Had the Israelites forgotten freedom they would have grown used to slavery. The worst exile is to forget that you are in exile.

To truly appreciate our freedom is to express it. As Jews, we express our freedom by living Jewishly. It isn't enough to enjoy the liberty to practice our faith. For if we do not exercise our right to our faith, we haven't truly tasted the taste of freedom.

This Passover, let us mark our liberation. No merely by the absence of slavery, but by the taste of freedom.

Each mitzvah we perform – from tefillin to visiting the infirm – is another nail in the coffin of slavery, another breath of the fresh air of freedom. If we truly long for freedom, let us display it in our lives and actions.

Certainly, G-d will act in kind and upgrade our freedom to a time when warfare, exile and hatred is wiped off the face of the earth. As we recite at the end of the Seder, Next year in Jerusalem!

With blessings for a Happy and Kosher Passover full of inspiration, joy, good health and spiritual advancement.

Sincerely yours,

Rabbi Mendel & Esther Lifshitz

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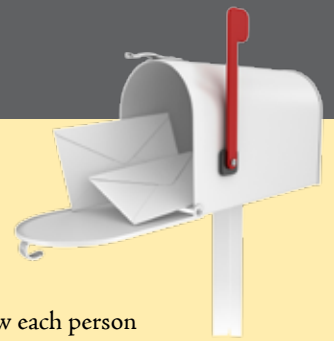
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Dear Rabbi Mendel & Esther,  
It's been many moons since Sukkot, but Asher and I have not forgotten what a wonderful time we had sharing a meal in your sukkah. Thank you so much for inviting us!

I really appreciate you thinking of us.

Asher and I are hoping to drop in to class very soon.

Hopefully, we will see you before too long!

Love,  
Candi R.

Dear Rabbi & Mrs. Lifshitz,  
Thank you for hosting Rachel at your Shabbos table. The Challah you sent with Miriam was delicious, beautiful and completely eaten by the end of Shabbos.

Rachel enjoyed the JLI class – her school work / clinical rotations are consuming a great deal of her time and are her life's priority right now. The impact of being at your table is greater than I can express.

I'm touched, knowing that she is having life transforming exposure to true Judaism – she is moved in ways that will be lasting. Thank G-d for your

kindness.  
May you and your family experience only blessings.  
Warmest regards,  
Tina Yomtov

Rabbi Mendel,  
We wanted to say thank you for the dreidels and gelt for the grandkids - you sent the exact amount! 12 grandkids, 12 Dreidels! We are all getting together tonight and will be handing them out. Again, with much thanks for the gifts and for all you and Esther do for our community.

Jim and Renee Hon

Rabbi,  
Thank you so much for all your help for assisting Yanai on his Bar Mitzvah. If not you, Yanai would not have had a Bar Mitzvah.

Thank you for everything.  
Warmly,  
Nir and Leetal Benzvi

Rabbi & Esther,  
Even though I have not seen you in so long, I want you to know that I read your emails every time they show up on my computer. I love them and they keep me in touch with who I am, a Jew, a proud Jew.  
Thank you,  
Sue Veeder

Shalom, dear Esther!  
The sufganiot you sent me are absolutely incredibly super delicious! I'm enjoying them as we speak,

with a cup of tea, and really do appreciate you thinking about me. To top it off, they were delivered by two lovely, vibrant ladies with the most positive attitudes (Miriam and Mushka).

Sorry again that I couldn't attend this year's festivities, let alone help out. I really wish I could've attended the Capitol celebration; maybe next year. I've been lighting candles twice every day, though - once at 6 with all the Jewish workers at the mall (we all gather at a special spot with a menorah), and then my own menorah when I come home later.

Yesterday I managed to see all the menorahs you put up around town (that tells you how much driving I do for my social work job on a typical day). I got to see the one by entrance to the connector, the one next to the Chabad Jewish Center, and, of course, the one on top of your car that was parked right there, as well as the Village one.

It warmed my heart each time I saw one. I truly rejoice each time I see one, and I'm grateful to Hashem for being in place and time where I can celebrate My, Our Holiday openly and proudly. And thank you, Chabad, for facilitating that!  
Thanks again, Esther!  
-All the best,  
Chana

Dear Rabbi Lifshitz and Family,

On behalf of myself and Simon, I just wanted to say a proper "Thank You" for having us over for Shabbat a couple weeks ago. We had a delightful time, enjoying the food, the learning, the sense of community,

and mostly getting to know each person present just a little better. What a talented and eclectic crew. I'm fascinated to see how your various endeavors will take shape over time.

Thanks again for a wonderful evening.  
Paul Epstein

Dear Esther,  
I was telling Karyn yesterday how amazing it was to see so many beautify young Jewish souls enter Shul. It added so much life to Chabad and was just so awesome. Thank G-d, Miriam does an amazing job with them all. Her love of the children and Torah shine through so much. The Boise community is so fortunate to have her!

Love,  
Lin Pyles

Rabbi Mendel,  
I just finished watching the video of Marthe Cohn's talk. This woman is extraordinary. Brave, resourceful, determined, and charming.  
You exposed the folks in Boise to a living Jewish legend. Thank you.  
You and your wife have made a real impact on Boise.  
Mazel Tov.  
Paul Pevzner

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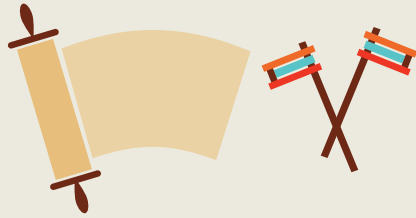
### Letters to the Editor

We'd love to hear from you. Please submit your comments, articles, suggestions and letters to [chabad@jewishidaho.com](mailto:chabad@jewishidaho.com) or send them via postal mail. All submissions are subject to editorial review.

## MITZVOT AND CUSTOMS OF PURIM

Purim is celebrated every year on the 14th of the Hebrew month of Adar (February/March), or Adar II in a leap year (this year is a Jewish leap year). The festival commemorates the salvation of the Jewish people in ancient Persia from Haman's plot of annihilation. For more on the story of Purim, see next page.

This year Purim begins on Wednesday evening, March 23, and continues through Thursday night, March 24. For more detailed instructions on the Purim observances visit [www.jewishidahoh.com/644343](http://www.jewishidahoh.com/644343).



### LISTEN TO THE MEGILLAH

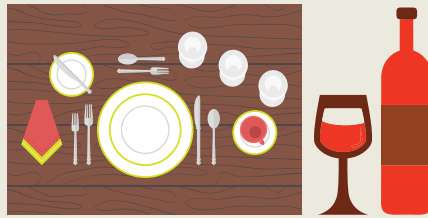
Megillat Esther is Esther's and Mordechai's firsthand narrative of Haman's plot to destroy the Jewish people, and how he was miraculously vanquished. We listen to the reading of the Megillah twice during Purim: once on Wednesday night, March 23, 2016 and again on Thursday, March 24, 2016. To properly fulfill the mitzvah, it is crucial to hear every single word of the megillah. Try not to miss a word! This is an interactive event: when Haman's name is mentioned, we twirl graggers (noisemakers) and stamp our feet to drown out the sound of his evil name.

Full schedule of local megillah readings at [www.jewishidahoh.com](http://www.jewishidahoh.com).



### SPECIAL PRAYERS

On Purim, the Al HaNissim liturgy is recited in the Amidah for evening, morning, and afternoon prayers, as well as in the Grace after Meals. In addition, during the Morning Prayer service there is a special reading from the Torah in the synagogue.



### EAT A FESTIVE MEAL

Purim is celebrated with a festive and joyous meal during the daytime of Thursday, March 24, 2016. Traditional foods include soup with kreplach (stuffed dumplings) and fruit—or nut—filled triangular cookies called hamantaschen. The hidden fillings in both foods remind us that G-d's everpresent involvement in the Purim episode was hidden, and not openly revealed. (In fact, the name of G-d is not mentioned even once in Megillat Esther!)



### COSTUMES & HAMANTASCHEN

A time-honored Purim custom is for children to dress up and disguise themselves—an allusion to the fact that the miracle of Purim was disguised in natural garments. This is also the significance behind a traditional Purim food, the hamantash—a pastry whose filling is hidden within a three-cornered crust.



### SEND GIFTS OF FOOD

Purim is a time to celebrate Jewish unity and friendship. We send packages containing at least two different kinds of ready-to-eat foods (e.g. hamantaschen and fruit) to at least one friend (men give to men and women give to women). These gifts, Mishloach Manot, are traditionally sent by a friendly messenger.



### GIVE TO THE POOR

Giving tzedakah (charity), a year-round obligation, is a particularly special mitzvah on Purim. Give charity to at least two needy individuals on Purim day, ideally by giving directly to the person. If this is not possible, place at least several coins into two different charity boxes. As with the other mitzvahs of Purim, even small children should be taught to fulfill this mitzvah.

## BEFORE & AFTER PURIM

### The Fast of Esther

For three days, the Jews fasted and prayed and asked G-d for help in the face of Haman's plot. Therefore we fast on the day before Purim from approximately two hours before sunrise until approximately 40 minutes after sunset. This year, we fast on Wednesday, March 23, 2016.

### Half a Shekel

To commemorate the half shekel contributed by each Jew during the month of Adar in the time of the Holy Temple, it is a tradition to give three silver half-dollar coins to charity. This is usually performed in the synagogue on the Fast of Esther.

### Zachor

The Shabbat before Purim (March 19, 2016), we read Parshat Zachor in the Torah. It tells of how Haman's ancestors, the nation of Amalek, brazenly attacked the Jewish people after our

spectacular exodus from Egypt, dispelling the aura of invincibility surrounding us. The Torah instructs us to erase all memory of Amalek. Amalek represents a cold rationality which inhibits awe or excitement. We destroy this Amalek within ourselves, and allow ourselves to fall more deeply in love with G-d and his Torah and mitzvahs.

### Shushan Purim

In certain ancient walled cities—Jerusalem is the primary example—Purim is observed not on the 14th of Adar (the date of its observance everywhere else), but on the 15th of Adar. This is to commemorate that fact that in the ancient walled city of Shushan, where the battles between the Jews and their enemies extended for an additional day, the original Purim celebration was held on the 15th of Adar.

The 15th of Adar is thus called "Shushan Purim," and is a day of joy and celebration also in those places where it is not observed as the actual Purim. This year it occurs on March 25.

# THE PURIM STORY

## A Fateful Party

It all began in Ancient Persia in the 4th century BCE. The Holy Temple that had stood in Jerusalem was destroyed more than 50 years earlier, and the Jews were subjects of the mighty Persian empire which extended over 127 lands.

Three years after King Ahasuerus ascended the Persian throne, when he felt secure in his new position, he celebrated by throwing a grand 180-day-long party for all his subjects. Following this extravagant gala, Ahasuerus hosted a smaller week-long party for the residents of the capital city of Shushan. In the palace's women's quarters, Ahasuerus' wife, Queen Vashti, hosted her own party for the Shushanite womenfolk.

On the seventh day of this party, Ahasuerus' heart "was merry with wine," and he commanded his wife Vashti to appear before all the partying men—he wanted to show them all her exquisite beauty. Vashti balked at this request, and at the advice of his advisor Memuchan, Ahasuerus ordered Vashti's execution.

## The Beauty Contest

When Ahasuerus' wrath dissipated, he was lonely for a wife. His servants suggested that he orchestrate a beauty pageant. Officers would be appointed in all the king's lands, and all beautiful girls would be brought to Ahasuerus. And the girl who would find favor in the king's eyes would be the queen.

The leader of the Jews at that time was a Shushanite resident named Mordechai. He had a cousin, Esther, who was orphaned as a young girl. Mordechai raised her and treated her as a daughter. Though she had no desire to be the queen, Esther was forcibly taken to the king's harem, to participate in the contest. While all the other contestant beautified themselves with perfumes and lotions, Esther did nothing. But G-d had His own plans. When Esther appeared before the king, he immediately liked her, and Esther became the new Queen of Persia. But as per Mordechai's directive, Esther refused to divulge her nationality—even to the king.

## Mordechai to the Rescue

Shortly after Esther became queen, Mordechai overheard two of the king's chamberlains discussing a plot to assassinate the king. Mordechai had them reported, and the traitors were hanged.

## The Anti-Semitic Prime Minister

Meanwhile, Haman, one of Ahasuerus' ministers, was promoted to the position of Prime Minister. Haman was a virulent Jew

hater; in fact he was a descendant of the notoriously anti-Semitic nation of Amalek.

Immediately after his promotion, the king issued a decree ordering everyone to bow down whenever Haman appeared. Now Haman would walk around with a large idol hanging from a chain around his neck. When Mordechai, a proud Jew, refused to bow down, Haman was infuriated. He resolved to take revenge against all the Jews and threw lots to determine the "lucky" day when he would implement his plan. The lot fell on the 13th day of the Hebrew month of Adar.

Haman approached Ahasuerus and offered him 10,000 silver talents in exchange for permission to exterminate the Jews. Ahasuerus, who was no friend of the Jews either, told Haman, "The money is yours to keep, and the nation is yours to do with as you please."

Haman immediately sent proclamations to all the king's land. These declarations, sealed with the royal signet ring, ordered the people to rise up against the Jews and kill them all – men, women, and children – on the following 13th of Adar.

## Mordechai's Request

Mordechai became aware of the decree. He rent his garments and donned sackcloth. He sent a message to Esther, asking her to approach the king and beg him to spare her people. Esther responded that according to the rules anyone who entered the king's presence un-summoned would be put to death—unless the king extended to that person his golden scepter. "And I," Esther said, "have not been summoned by the king for thirty days already!"

Mordechai sent another message: "Do not think that you will escape the fate of all the Jews by being in the king's palace. For if you will remain silent at this time, relief and salvation will come to the Jews from another source, and you and the house of your father will be lost. And who knows if it is not for just such a time that you reached this royal position."

Esther agreed to approach the king. But she asked Mordechai to gather all the Jews in Shushan and let them all fast for three days and nights. And then Esther would put her life in her hands and approach the king.

Mordechai complied with Esther's request. He gathered the Jews of Shushan – especially the children, 22,000 of them – and they fasted, repented and prayed to G-d.

## The First Feast

After three days of fasting, Esther donned royal garb and entered Ahasuerus' chambers.

Immediately, the king extended his scepter. "What is your request?" Ahasuerus asked.

"I would like to invite the king and Haman to a small feast," Esther responded.

So the king and Haman joined Esther for a wine-feast. During the feast, the king again asked Esther whether she had anything to request. "Yes," Esther responded. "I would appreciate if tomorrow, again, the king and Haman would join me for a feast. And then I will tell the king my request."

Haman left the party a happy and proud man. Oh the honor he was being accorded! But standing at the king's gate was Mordechai – who still refused to bow to Haman – and Haman was enraged. When he arrived home, his wife and wise advisors counseled him to erect a gallows, and then to go to the king and request permission to hang Mordechai. Haman excitedly went ahead and put up the gallows.

## The Beginning of the End

Sleep eluded the king that night, so he asked his servants to read for him from the Royal Chronicles. They complied with the king's orders. They read from the Chronicles how Mordechai saved the king's life when two of his chamberlains hatched a plot to kill him.

"Was he rewarded for this fine act?" Ahasuerus asked. "No he was not," the servants responded.

At that moment Haman entered the king's courtyard. His purpose? To ask the king's permission to hang Mordechai! Before Haman could utter a word, Ahasuerus addressed him: "My Haman, in your estimation, what shall be done to a person whom the king wishes to honor?"

Haman, who was certain that the king wished to honor him, responded: "Bring royal garment and a royal horse. And let one of the king's nobles dress the man and lead him on the horse through the city streets, proclaiming before him, 'So is done for the man whom the king wishes to honor!'"

"Great idea," Ahasuerus responded. "Now go get the garments and the horse and do so for Mordechai the Jew!"

Haman had no choice but to comply. On the next day he went and honored Mordechai as the king had ordered, and then immediately rushed to join the king and Esther for...

## The Second Feast

"What is your request?" a curious King Ahasuerus asked Esther at the feast.



"If I have found favor in your

eyes, O King," Esther

pleaded, "and if it pleases the king, let my life be granted me by my plea, and the life of my people by my request.

For my people and I have been sold to be annihilated, killed and destroyed!" Esther then identified Haman as the evil person who wished to perpetrate this atrocity.

The king was greatly angered. When he was then informed that Haman had built a gallows for Mordechai, he ordered that Haman be hanged on that very gallows.

## The Tables Are Turned

On that day, Haman's estate was given to Esther, and Mordechai was appointed Prime Minister.

But Esther was far from satisfied. Haman was dead, but his evil decree was still in effect. According to Persian law, once a king issues a decree it can not be rescinded. But the king gave Mordechai and Esther permission, and they promptly wrote up a decree that countermanded Haman's edict. The decree granted the Jews permission to defend themselves against their enemies. And by this time, considering that all knew that the queen and Prime Minister were both Jewish, no one would prevent the Jews from doing just that!

And the Jews in Shushan were oh so happy. Celebrations abounded!

## The Battle

On the 13th of Adar that year, the Jews throughout the Persian Empire mobilized and killed the enemies who had wanted to kill them. In Shushan, among the dead were Haman's ten sons.

Esther asked the king's permission for the Jews in Shushan to have one more day to destroy their enemy—and the king acceded to her wish. On that day, the 14th of Adar, the Jews worldwide celebrated, and the Jews of Shushan killed more of their enemies, and also hung Haman's sons. The Jews of Shushan then rested and celebrated on the 15th of Adar.

## In Commemoration

Mordechai and Esther established a holiday to commemorate these amazing events. Jews worldwide celebrate on the 14th of Adar, while residents of walled cities – like Shushan – celebrate on the 15th of Adar. This holiday, called "Purim," is the most joyous holiday on the Jewish calendar.

More about Purim at [www.jewishidahoh.com/purim](http://www.jewishidahoh.com/purim)

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# SEEING THE BLIND a pesach story

by Rabbi B. Cunin

As the sun was about to set, my train broke down in the middle of the Bronx and I had to walk. Heading in the general direction of Pelham Parkway, I kept asking people where the address was. I remember one helpful soul who told me, "Son, you've got a long way to go!"

Earlier that afternoon, a group of students in Brooklyn had finished baking the last of the Passover matzah. It was 1958, and the Lubavitcher Rebbe had a custom of giving hand-baked matzah to people as a spiritual gift before Passover. He would stand for hours, greeting people and handing them matzah. The Zohar says matzah is the "bread of faith," and simply eating it nourishes the soul.

The Rebbe would give matzah first to the people who had to travel far, because riding in a car or subway is not permitted on Shabbat and Jewish holidays. I was 16 and had to get home to 167th and Jerome Avenue in the Bronx, which was pretty far away. When I approached the Rebbe, he handed me matzah and asked if I could deliver some to a certain family.

Ideally, I would have taken a taxi from the subway station, asked the driver to wait, delivered the matzah, and gotten home in time for our Seder. But life is seldom ideal. Eventually, I found the address, which turned out



to be a housing project. I knocked on the door and out came a man with no shirt, tattoos and a potbelly.

"What is it?" he snapped. In the Bronx, it's proper etiquette to snap when greeting someone. "Excuse me, are you Mr. So-and-so?" I asked. "Yeah," he said. I noticed the loaf of rye bread sitting on the table, definitely not a traditional Seder food. I said, "The Rebbe sent me."

"The Rebbe? Oh, please come in," he said. The tiny kitchen contained only a small table, some chairs and a hot plate. I didn't understand what I was doing there, delivering matzah to a family that wasn't celebrating Passover. Then I thought, perhaps that's exactly why I was there.

I asked the man if he would like to have a Seder. He

agreed and called for his wife to come in. She entered, visibly pregnant, with two beautiful little girls, maybe five or six years old, trailing behind. Both girls were blind.

We cleared off the table. I put a hat on the man's head and said, "Okay, we're having a Seder!" I tried to remember the blessings in the proper order, but it was difficult without a Haggadah. We ate the matzah and used water and paper cups to recall the four cups of wine. I tried to think what the Rebbe would do if he was here. I looked at the little girls and at their mother, about to have another child, and began to tell them some things I had learned from the Rebbe.

I told them that we have to have faith. On this night, G d liberated our ancestors from slavery, and He liberates us, too. The husband and wife seemed to hang on every word, like they were getting nourishment just by listening. I told them that on Passover, we journey through our personal Egypt to freedom, and that G d doesn't put on our shoulders more than we can carry. Once you know that, and believe it, you're already liberated. We sang songs with the children and time flew.

At 1:00 a.m., the woman put the girls to bed and it was time for me to leave, but I had to ask the man how he knew the Rebbe. It turned out he was a tanner and was acquainted with a rabbi who worked at another section of the meat plant. Several months ago, his wife had become pregnant. Since they had a disease that caused their children to be born blind, their doctor recommended an abortion. The man was very depressed and didn't know what to do. So he asked this rabbi, who suggested that he write a letter to the Lubavitcher Rebbe. The Rebbe wrote back, saying that they should have faith in G d and have the child.

As I was about to leave, the man said, "You know, my wife and I weren't sure about this. How are we supposed to have faith? How are we supposed to forget what is and have hope? We didn't think it was possible. But tonight, hearing about faith and how G d gives us the strength to overcome our personal Egypt, well, now we understand."

Their son was born fully sighted. Over time, I lost track of this family, but years later I learned that the daughters had married and that each had several children, all sighted.

To really describe the Rebbe's love for hundreds of thousands of Jews and non-Jews all over the world would be impossible. The best I could do is to write about a poor family in the Bronx, living in a housing project for the blind. And how the Rebbe had faith hand-delivered to their door.

More Passover stories at [jewishidahoh.com/1667](http://jewishidahoh.com/1667)

## KOSHER FOR PASSOVER

TRUE HUMOR & MEANING ALL ROLLED IN ONE

The rabbi's silhouette stood in stark contrast to the light-browns of the parched African veldt.

The old African woman had been insistent. "Please meet me here tomorrow, I have something very important to show you."

Soon enough, an ancient white Combi pulled up to the spot where the rabbi had been standing. "Please come, it is about a twenty five minute drive from here." Acting on instinct, the rabbi decided to go with her.

The car clattered down the rutted road, the blazing sun glinting off the chrome of its 1930's frame. Just beyond the environs of the city, they reached the cemetery.

"Here is my husband's gravesite" whispered the woman as tears coursed down her face. "He would have liked a rabbi to have been here."

The rabbi stared at the grave, noticing the most unusual headstone. Engraved on the stone, above the man's name, were the Hebrew words kosher l'pesach "Kosher for Passover."

What made it even more unusual was the fact that the words were inscribed upside-down.

The woman explained that her husband had arrived in Namibia as a young lad; he had worked hard, married, lived an entire lifetime with her and never divulged anything about his upbringing in London as a child.

He had never mentioned the fact that he was Jewish, nor had he in fact mentioned anything about religion at all.

On his death-bed, he summoned all his remaining energy and told her that he was Jewish and would like the world to remember that he was.

He had saved the one thing that crossed his path and signified some sort of Jewish identity for him.

It was a box of Kosher-for-Passover matzos...

"Please inscribe this on my headstone" he stated, and those were his actual last words.



# Ask the Rabbi

## Is déjà vu real?

I often get déjà vu, the sensation that I have already lived this moment before. It has happened when I travel to new destinations with people I have never met, and I feel that I have been there in that place, with the same people, hearing that very conversation before. Is there a Jewish explanation for this?

by Aaron Moss

Some suggest that déjà vu is a sign of reincarnation. You feel you were here before because you were, in a previous life. Others explain that you had a predictive dream of the scene before it happened, and now you are seeing your dream materialize.

Maybe. There is a more mundane explanation. In my personal experience, I get déjà vu only when my brain is a little tired. What seems to be happening is that my conscious mind is idle, but my memory is working in the background. So I am feeling the sensation of remembering the scene in front of me before I actually experience it in the present. It is as if the scene has slipped past my awareness and gone straight into my memory.

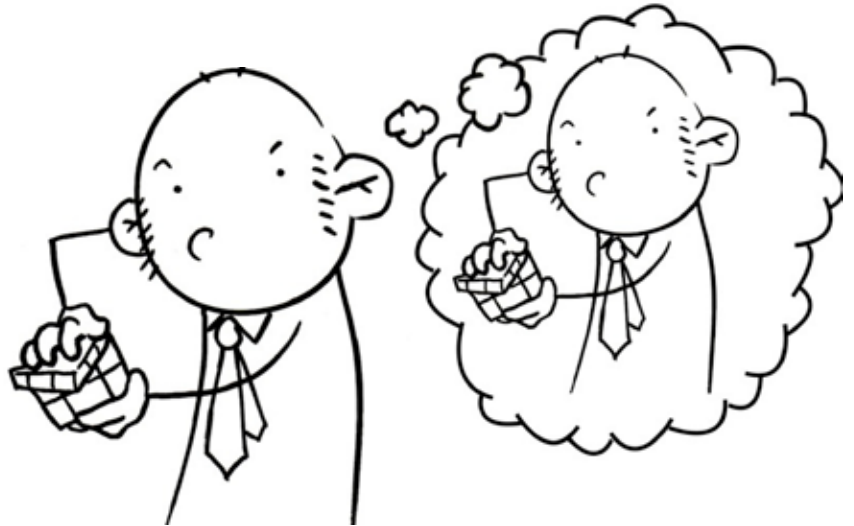
There is a simple test to see whether déjà vu means you really have seen this before, or your mind is playing tricks on you. Can you blurt out what someone else is about to say before they even say it? If so, that must come from somewhere beyond intellect. But if you feel like you knew what they were going to say only after they already said it, I'm not so sure it means anything, except that you need to get some rest.

But then there is a far deeper type of déjà vu. It's called resonance. You hear an insight, a teaching, a truth, and although you have never heard it before, you know it is right. The idea rings true, seems familiar and comfortable. You are at home with it. It's what you always knew, but had never put into words. It resonates with you.

This happens when you study authentic Torah. You hear its message, and you know deep down that it is true. This is because you have heard it before. Our souls are taught the divine truths before we enter this world, but we forget it all at birth.

However, an imprint remains, a faint memory, so we will know truth when we find it.

There are many false ideas and temporary fads that sound interesting and may gain much popularity, but on the deepest level they do not resonate with us. Our mission on earth is to search for the divine message, to put aside momentary distractions and regain that eternal truth, the truth our soul is waiting to hear again.



This is real déjà vu. Have you heard that before?


More Ask the Rabbi at [www.jewishidaho.com/asktherabbi](http://www.jewishidaho.com/asktherabbi)

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# PASSOVER GUIDE



## WHAT IS PASSOVER?

The eight-day festival of Passover is celebrated in the early spring, from the 15th through the 22nd of the Hebrew month of Nissan. This year, Pesach begins at sunset on April 22 and ends at nightfall on April 30. It commemorates the emancipation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt. And, by following the rituals of Passover, we have the ability to relive and experience the true freedom that our ancestors gained.

### *The 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.

*See page 13 for the full Passover story.*

### *Passover Observances*

Passover is divided into two parts: The first two days and last two days (the latter commemorating the splitting of the Red Sea) are full-fledged holidays. Holiday candles are lit at night, and kiddush and sumptuous holiday meals are enjoyed 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.



## NO CHAMETZ

To commemorate the unleavened bread that the Israelites ate when they left Egypt, we don't eat—or even retain in our possession—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 for the duration of the holiday.

*Visit [www.jewishidaho.com/1753](http://www.jewishidaho.com/1753) to learn more about Chametz.*

## MATZAH

Instead of chametz, we eat matzah—flat unleavened bread. It is a mitzvah to partake of matzah on the two Seder nights, and during the rest of the holiday it is optional.

*Visit [www.jewishidaho.com/1747](http://www.jewishidaho.com/1747) to learn more about matzah.*

## THE SEDERS

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.



*To learn more about Passover - including videos, recipes, classes, crafts and more - visit [www.jewishidaho.com/passover](http://www.jewishidaho.com/passover).*

# PASSOVER GUIDE

## THE PASSOVER SEDER

The easiest way to enjoy a great Passover Seder is to come to one. You can join us, join a friend or host your own.

Millennia before the Wii, an ancient desert tribe of mystics enacted the first multimedia educational experience. Beyond anything we have today, it reached deep into the human psyche in every way possible and all at once: Rich audio, dynamic visuals, spoken language and written text, even the visceral senses of taste, smell and touch.

It was intergenerational — involving all the family with something special for each one. It was customizable, adjustable to a spectrum of personalities. It was interactive, with role-playing and creative manipulation of materials. It was a whole-person experience, developing a sense of inner freedom within all who participated.

But its most fascinating aspect was that every detail was firmly grounded in the mystical teachings of an esoteric tradition. Each step had not just a body, but a soul as well — a simple meaning as well as a deep lesson towards higher consciousness.

Its success has been awe-inspiring. No ritual has survived so long and so true to its original form. No lesson has affected humankind with such impact, propagating the values of human dignity, liberty and the search for higher meaning to every society it has reached.

To this day, in every corner of the world, Jewish families come together to reconstruct that original Passover Seder, again and again, year after year. And every year, there is more to learn.

Whether with us or at home, make this the most memorable and meaningful Pesach ever.

## ELEMENTS OF THE SEDER

### The Haggadah - Your Friendly Guide

The Seder is a time to retell the story of the Exodus and the history of our nation's birth, but also much



more.

The observances at the Seder-table allow one to actually re-experience a modern-day Exodus; facilitating one's own spiritual rebirth and empowering each man, woman and child with a renewed sense of inner freedom and spiritual resolve.

The Passover Haggadah, which records the Seder's narrative, says that in each generation man must see himself as if he had personally gone out of Egypt. Judaism teaches that Egypt and the nefarious Pharaoh symbolize the negative forces that constrict man. The slavery in Egypt represents the emotional and psychological shackles that confine and enslave the human spirit, constraining one's ability to live up to his or her fullest spiritual

# 15 Steps of the Seder

קִדְּשׁ . וְרַחֵץ . בְּרַפֵּס . יַחֵץ . מַגִּיד . רְחֹצָה . מוֹצֵיא . מִנְצָה .  
מְרוֹר . פּוֹרֵךְ . שְׁלַחַן עוֹרֵךְ . צְפוּן . פְּרֹךְ . הַלֵּל . נְרֵצָה :

### KADESH—THE BENEDICTION

**1** The Seder service begins with the recitation of kiddush, proclaiming the holiness of the holiday. This is done over a cup of wine, the first of the four cups we will drink at the Seder.

### URCHATZ—PURIFICATION

**2** We wash our hands in the usual, ritually prescribed manner as is done before a meal, but without the customary blessing. The next step in the Seder, Karpas, requires dipping food into water, which in turn mandates, according to Jewish law, that either the food be eaten with a utensil or that one's hands be purified by washing. On the Seder eve we choose the less common observance to arouse the child's curiosity.

### KARPAS—THE "APPETIZER"

**3** A small piece of onion or boiled potato is dipped into saltwater and eaten (after reciting the blessing over vegetables). Dipping the karpas in saltwater is an act of pleasure and freedom, which further arouses the child's curiosity.

### YACHATZ—BREAKING MATZAH

**4** The middle matzah on the Seder

plate is broken in two. The larger part is put aside for later use as the afikoman. This unusual action not only attracts the child's attention once again, but also recalls G-d's splitting of the Sea of Reeds to allow the Children of Israel to cross on dry land. The smaller part of the middle matzah is returned to the Seder plate. This broken middle matzah symbolizes humility, and will be eaten later as the "bread of poverty."

### MAGGID—THE HAGGADAH

At this point, the poor are invited to join the Seder. The Seder tray is moved aside, a second cup of wine is poured, and the child, who by now is bursting with curiosity, asks the time-honored question: "Mah nishtanah ha-lailah hazeh mikol ha-leilot? Why is this night different from all other nights?" Why the dipping? Why only matzah? Why the bitter herbs? Why are we relaxing and leaning on cushions as if we were kings?

The child's questioning triggers one of the most significant mitzvot of Passover, which is the highlight of the Seder ceremony: the haggadah, telling the story of the Exodus from Egypt. The answer includes a brief

potential. If there was ever a paradox it is this: that on Passover eve, the night that freedom was born, we experience freedom by following a sequence of fifteen defined steps. We call it the Seder or "Order."

As you relive slavery and liberation, the Haggadah will tell you exactly where you are, when, and why. Whether you're a true believer, a diehard skeptic, an innocent bystander or the guy who doesn't even notice anything out of the ordinary, the Haggadah speaks to you. It even speaks to kids (especially your inner child), filled with customs that make the Seder stimulating. You can download a copy at [www.jewishidah.com/haggadah](http://www.jewishidah.com/haggadah) or buy one at [store.jewishidah.com](http://store.jewishidah.com).



review of history, a description of the suffering imposed upon the Israelites, a listing of the plagues visited on the Egyptians, and an enumeration of the miracles performed by the Almighty for the redemption of His people.

## ROCHTZAH—WASHING

**6** After concluding the first part of the haggadah by drinking the second cup of wine, the hands are washed again, this time with the customary blessings, as is usually done before eating bread.

## MOTZI MATZAH—EAT MATZAH

**7-8** Taking hold of the three matzot (with the broken one between the two whole ones), recite the customary blessing before bread. Then, letting the bottom matzah drop back onto the plate, and holding the top whole matzah with the broken middle one, recite the special blessing “al achilat matzah.” Then break at least one ounce from each matzah and eat the two pieces together, while reclining.

## MAROR—THE BITTER HERBS

**9** Take at least one ounce of the bitter herbs. Dip it in the charoset, then shake the latter off and make the blessing “al achilat maror.” Eat without reclining.

## KORECH—THE SANDWICH

**10** In keeping with the custom instituted by Hillel, the great Talmudic sage, a sandwich of matzah and maror is eaten. Break off two pieces of the bottom matzah, which together should be at least one ounce. Again, take at least one ounce of bitter herbs and dip them in the charoset. Place this between the two pieces of matzah, say “kein

asah Hillel . . .” Eat while reclining.

## SHULCHAN ORECH—THE FEAST

The holiday meal is now served. We begin the meal with a hard-boiled egg dipped into saltwater.

## TZAFUN—OUT OF HIDING

After the meal, the half-matzah which had been “hidden,” set aside for the afikoman (“dessert”), is taken out and eaten. It symbolizes the Paschal lamb, which was eaten at the end of the meal.

Everyone should eat at least 1½ ounces of matzah, reclining, before midnight. After eating the afikoman, we do not eat or drink anything except for the last two cups of wine.

## BERACH—BLESSINGS ON MEAL

A third cup of wine is filled and Grace is recited. After the Grace we recite the blessing over wine and drink the third cup.

We now fill the cup of Elijah and our own cups with wine. We open the door and recite the passage which is an invitation to the Prophet Elijah, the harbinger of the coming of Moshiach, our righteous Messiah.

## HALLEL—SONGS OF PRAISE

At this point, having recognized the Almighty and His unique guidance of the Jewish people, we go still further and sing His praises as L-rd of the entire universe. After reciting the Hallel, we again recite the blessing over wine and drink the fourth cup, reclining.

## NIRTZAH—ACCEPTANCE

Having carried out the Seder service properly, we are sure that it has been well received by the Almighty. We then say “Leshanah haba’ah bee-rushalayim—Next year in Jerusalem.”

## The Four Cups of Wine

The cups represent four stages toward freedom: “I will release you . . . I will save you . . . I will liberate you . . . I will take you unto me as a nation” (Exodus 6:6-7).

First Cup—physical removal from the land of Egypt (“I will release you”);

Second Cup—liberation from intellectual and spiritual slavery (“I will save you”);

Third Cup—creation of a people forever immune to permanent slavery (“I will liberate you”);

Fourth Cup—G-d’s acceptance of Israel as His chosen people and the granting of the Torah at Sinai (“I will take you unto me as a nation”).

Also, the Children of Israel had four great merits even while in exile: (1) They did not change their Hebrew names; (2) they continued to speak their own language, Hebrew; (3) they remained highly moral; (4) they remained loyal to one another.

A fifth cup of wine, a special Cup of Elijah, is filled after the Seder’s blessing Grace After Meal. The soul of the spiritually immortal Elijah the Prophet visits every Jewish home on Seder night, and this one’s symbolically for him.

## The Seder Plate

### ZEROAH (SHANKBONE):

The Paschal Lamb is represented by the zeroah. Mystical tradition replaces the shank bone with a roasted chicken neck that is not eaten, as a reminder that although we approach freedom during the Seder, our ultimate freedom is soon to come with the Final Redemption.

BEITZAH (EGG): The egg symbolizes the Festival Offering made on Passover in the ancient Holy Temple.

MAROR (BITTER HERBS/HORSERADISH): The bitterness of suffering in Egypt is brought to the table with maror.

KARPAS (VEGETABLE): Egypt crushed our ancestors’ spirits with senseless, back-breaking drudgery. A vegetable, usually an onion, potato or parsley is dipped in saltwater and eaten so we may

taste their tears of anguish.

CHAROSET (MIXTURE OF FRUITS AND NUTS): As slaves we used mortar—symbolized by charoset—to make bricks that formed structures which we erected.

CHAZERET (ROMAINE LETTUCE): The initial stages of exile were pleasant, yet soon the injustices of slavery became overwhelming.

So too, the first taste of chazeret is mild, but soon the taste of its bitter root becomes dominant.



## The Three Matzot: The Bread of Faith

Our ancestors displayed the deepest levels of faith when they followed G-d into the desert with such haste that there wasn’t even time for the bread they had baked to rise. The three matzot represent the entire Jewish people — the priests, the tribe of Levi, and the rest of Israel. In keeping with the mystical tradition, “Shmurah Matzah” is used. This is made of flour that has been carefully isolated from any contact with water, from harvest through grinding and kneading, making it very kosher for Passover.

## PASSOVER PREPARATIONS

Passover is a holiday that mandates our complete involvement, not just during its eight days but for weeks before. Aside from the regular holiday obligations, we are also commanded:

*No leaven shall be eaten... For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread...and no leaven shall be seen of yours [in your possession] (Exodus 13:3-7).*

We accomplish this by cleaning our homes well and inspecting them before Passover, and gradually eliminating chametz from every room and crevice. This intensive cleaning takes place in Jewish homes throughout the world. The following will help you tackle the process in your own home.

### What is Chametz?

Any leavened product containing wheat, barley, oats, rye or spelt is considered chametz and is forbidden on Passover. Clear your home of all chametz. Empty pockets and vacuum cleaner bags, and even replace pet food if necessary. You'll use separate sets of dishes for Passover, so gather all your chametz dishes and store them in a closet which will be sealed off for Passover.

### Passover Shopping

Any processed food you eat on Passover (and year-round) needs kosher supervision. Today, that's no big deal—the supermarkets are filled with “Kosher for Passover” products. Fruits, vegetables and most things raw and unprocessed are kosher for Passover. (Ask your rabbi about beans and legumes).

One way to do this is to go healthy for eight days and cook everything from scratch. For a complete guide to making your house kosher for Passover, along with a storehouse of knockout recipes, get your hands on *The Spice and Spirit of Kosher for Passover Cooking* (2003), available at [www.jewishidaho.com/1803](http://www.jewishidaho.com/1803). For good links to Passover foods, check out [www.jewishidaho.com/32593](http://www.jewishidaho.com/32593). You can also contact us with any questions you may have.

### Selling your Chametz

Since it is prohibited to eat or even own chametz during the eight days of Passover, we sell our chametz to a non-Jew. This is a legally binding sale in both Jewish and civil law, and we let the experts handle it. Fill out the form on the enclosed envelope, also online at [www.jewishidaho.com/sellchametz](http://www.jewishidaho.com/sellchametz), called “Mechirat Chametz (Sale of Chametz),” a legal document that authorizes your rabbi to transfer the ownership of your chametz for the duration of Passover. He will buy it back for you after the holiday is over.

## The Search for Chametz

On the night before Passover begins (April 21), we perform a formal search of the house for chametz. We tightly roll ten pieces of chametz into paper wrappings and hide them around the house (make sure you keep a list). Traditionally, a candle is used to light the way, and a spoon (as a shovel), a feather (as a broom) and a paper bag (as a receptacle) are used to collect any chametz found.

Say the blessing:

*Baruch Atah Ado-nai Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-Olam, Asher Kid'shanu B'mitzvotav V'tzivanu Al Biur Chametz.*

*Blessed are You, G-d, our Lord, King of the Universe, Who has sanctified us with His mitzvahs and commanded us concerning the elimination of chametz.*

After the search, place all

found Chametz in a conspicuous spot until morning and say:

*All leaven or anything leavened which is in my possession, which I have neither seen nor removed, and about which I am unaware, shall be considered naught and ownerless as the dust of the earth.*

### Fast of the Firstborn

When G-d slew the firstborn sons of Egypt, he spared the Jewish firstborns. In commemoration and thanks, firstborn sons fast on the day Passover begins (this year 4/3). It is said that “joy breaks all boundaries.” Since the joy of a mitzvah—such as the completion of studying a Talmudic tractate—transcends the obligation to fast, many firstborn sons break their fast early with a seudat mitzvah (mitzvah meal of joy), by completing the study of a tractate on

this day.

## The Burning of Chametz

All chametz found during the formal search is burned in the morning. Chametz consumption should be concluded as well, bringing your interaction with chametz down to nil. The sale of chametz also goes into effect at this time. (Check page 15 for local times.) Once the chametz has burned, we recite the “Kol Chamirah” to disown any chametz that has been overlooked:

To disown any overlooked Chametz, say the following:

*All leaven or anything leavened which is in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have observed it or not, whether I have removed it or not, shall be considered naught and ownerless as the dust of the earth.*



## THE REST OF PASSOVER

### THE COUNTING OF THE OMER

On the second night of Passover we begin the counting of the Omer, named for the Omer offering of new crops, brought in the Temple on the second day of Passover. We count 49 days in anticipation from Passover until Shavuot, when we received the Torah at Mount Sinai. During the Omer count, we work to spiritually prepare ourselves for this monumental event. A person has 49 emotional and spiritual traits, and each day of the Omer is a propitious time to work on a particular aspect, until our soul is fully primed to receive G-dliness on the 50th day, Shavuot.

For more, including Omer calendar and reminders, visit [www.jewishidaho.com/130631](http://www.jewishidaho.com/130631).

### THE INTERMEDIATE DAYS OF PASSOVER

In between the first two and last two holy days of Passover, except for Shabbat, go ahead and function relatively normally. The only exception is, like your mother keeps telling you, you shouldn't work so hard. Keep your spirits up: it's a custom to drink a glass of wine every day of Passover.

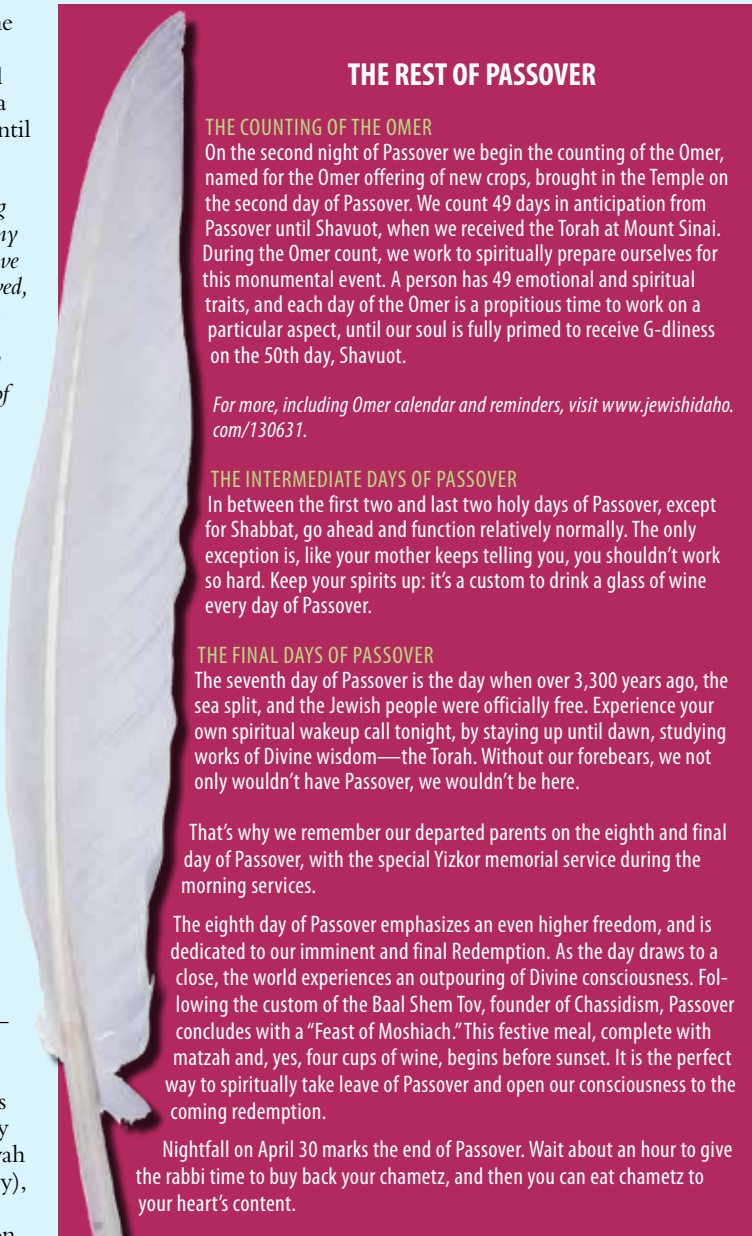
### THE FINAL DAYS OF PASSOVER

The seventh day of Passover is the day when over 3,300 years ago, the sea split, and the Jewish people were officially free. Experience your own spiritual wakeup call tonight, by staying up until dawn, studying works of Divine wisdom—the Torah. Without our forebears, we not only wouldn't have Passover, we wouldn't be here.

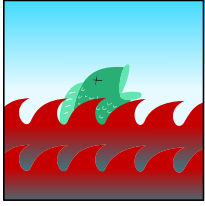
That's why we remember our departed parents on the eighth and final day of Passover, with the special Yizkor memorial service during the morning services.

The eighth day of Passover emphasizes an even higher freedom, and is dedicated to our imminent and final Redemption. As the day draws to a close, the world experiences an outpouring of Divine consciousness. Following the custom of the Baal Shem Tov, founder of Chassidism, Passover concludes with a “Feast of Moshiaich.” This festive meal, complete with matzah and, yes, four cups of wine, begins before sunset. It is the perfect way to spiritually take leave of Passover and open our consciousness to the coming redemption.

Nightfall on April 30 marks the end of Passover. Wait about an hour to give the rabbi time to buy back your chametz, and then you can eat chametz to your heart's content.



# THE PASSOVER STORY



## Arrival in Egypt

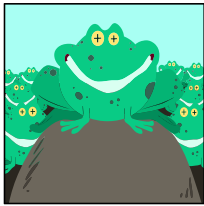
Jacob and his children had arrived in Egypt to be close to Joseph; he was second in command to King Pharaoh, and with his ingenuity had saved the people of Egypt, and by extension those from neighboring countries, from

death by famine. Jacob and his children were settled in the city of Goshen and prospered wonderfully--their numbers grew and grew.

As long as Jacob's sons are alive, the Children of Israel are accorded honor and respect, but after the passing of Joseph, "There arose a new king in Egypt who knew not Joseph"--some commentaries say, chose not to know Joseph--"And he said to his people. 'Behold the Children of Israel are more and mightier than we. Come, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply...'" (Exodus 1:8-10).

## Enslavement

The Egyptians' way of dealing with their "Jewish Problem" is to enslave the Jews. They are all forced into backbreaking labor, compelled to build cities of treasure houses for Pharaoh. But still, the Jews continue to multiply, to Pharaoh's eyes, at an ever frightening pace. To put a stop to this, Pharaoh summons the Jewish midwives, Shifra and Puah, and commands them to kill all Jewish newborn males. This, he is certain, will put an end to the propagation of this race. When the midwives defy his order, he commands that they cast all the newborn males into the Nile--his stargazers had predicted that the savior of the Jews would die through water--and Pharaoh hopes his plan will ensure an early death for any potential Jewish leader.



## Moses' Birth

Jocheved, the wife of the Levite Amram, gives birth to a son. Because he is born three months early, she is able to conceal him for that amount of time. When she can no longer hide him, she builds a small water-proof cradle and puts her child on the brink of the Nile. The boy's sister, Miriam, hides nearby to watch him.



Pharaoh's daughter comes to bathe in the river when she sees the floating cradle. When she opens it and sees the weeping baby, she realizes that this is a Jewish child, but her compassion is aroused and she resolves to take the baby home. She names him Moses,

meaning "he who was drawn from the water."

Miriam approaches the princess and offers to find a wet-nurse for the baby. When Pharaoh's daughter accepts, Miriam brings her Jocheved, whom Pharaoh's daughter hires to nurse and care for the child. When Moses grows older, he is returned to the palace, where Pharaoh's daughter raises him like a son.

## Moses is Appointed Leader

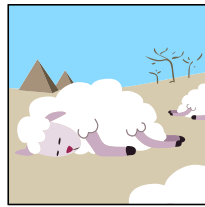
As a young man, Moses leaves the palace and discovers the hardship of his brethren. He sees an Egyptian beating a Hebrew and kills the Egyptian. The next day he sees

two Jews fighting; when he admonishes them, they reveal his deed of the previous day, and Moses is forced to flee to Midian. There he rescues Jethro's daughters, marries one of them - Zipporah - and becomes a shepherd of his father-in-law's flocks.



In the meantime, the plight of the Jews in Egypt worsens, "and their cry rose up to G-d."

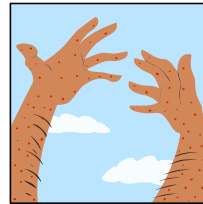
As Moses is shepherding his flock, he comes upon a burning bush, in which G-d appears to him and instructs him to go to Pharaoh and demand: "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me." Moses objects, citing a speech defect he acquired while in the palace, and so Moses' brother, Aaron, is appointed to serve as his spokesman. In Egypt, Moses and



Aaron assemble the elders of Israel to tell them that the time of their redemption has come. The people believe; but Pharaoh refuses to let them go and even intensifies the suffering of Israel. He increases the burden of labor on his Hebrew slaves, commanding their taskmasters to cease

bringing the Israelites straw to make the bricks. Now, they must go to the fields to collect the straw themselves, but maintain the same quota of brick production.

Moses can no longer bear the pain of his people; he turns to G-d saying, "Why have You done evil to this people?" G-d promises the redemption is close at hand, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land."



G-d then reveals Himself to Moses. Employing the "four expressions of redemption," He promises to take out the Children of Israel from Egypt, deliver them from their enslavement, redeem them and acquire them as His own chosen people at Mount Sinai; He will then bring them to the Land He promised to the Patriarchs as their eternal heritage.

## The Ten Plagues

Moses and Aaron repeatedly come before Pharaoh to demand in G-d's name, "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me in the wilderness." Pharaoh repeatedly refuses. Aaron's staff turns into a snake and swallows the magic sticks of the Egyptian sorcerers.

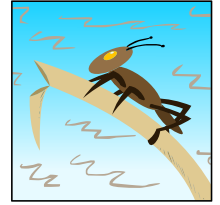


Pharaoh still refuses to let the Jews go. Moses warns him that G-d will smite Egypt. Pharaoh remains impervious. G-d begins to send a series of plagues upon the Egyptians. In the throes of each plague, Pharaoh promises to let the Children of Israel go; but he reneges the moment the affliction is removed.

1) Aaron strikes the Nile, the waters turn to blood; 2) Swarms of frogs overrun the land;

3) Lice infest all men and beasts. Still, Pharaoh remains stubborn; 4) Hordes of wild animals invade the cities, 5) a pestilence kills the domestic animals, 6) painful boils afflict the Egyptians.

7) Fire and ice combine to descend from the skies as a devastating hail. Still, "the heart of Pharaoh was hardened and he would not let the children of Israel go; as G-d had said to Moses."



The people of Egypt have suffered too much. They beg Pharaoh to let the Jews go. When Moses comes to warn Pharaoh of the eighth plague, Pharaoh says: You say that you want to go serve your G-d? I'll let the men go, as long as the women and children stay behind. No, says Moses, we must all go, men women and children, cattle and herds. Pharaoh once again refuses.

The next plagues descend upon Egypt.



8) A swarm of locusts devours all the crops and greenery; 9) a thick, palpable darkness envelops the land.

The Israelites are instructed to bring a "Passover offering" to G-d: a lamb or kid is to be slaughtered and its blood

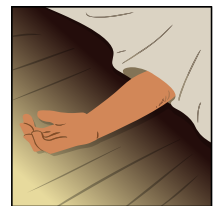
sprinkled on the doorposts and lintel of every Israelite home, so that G-d should pass over these homes when He comes to kill the Egyptian firstborn. The roasted meat of the offering is to be eaten that night together with matzah (unleavened bread) and bitter herbs.

Then G-d brings the tenth plague upon Egypt,

10) all the firstborn of Egypt are killed at the stroke of midnight of the 15th of the month of Nisan.

## Exodus

The death of the firstborn finally breaks Pharaoh's resistance and he literally begs the Children of Israel to leave his land. Following G-d's command, they hastily depart; so hastily there is no time for their dough to rise, and the only provisions they take along are unleavened. They receive from the Egyptians gold, silver and garments, emerging from Egypt a wealthy nation.



The Children of Israel are commanded to observe the anniversary of the Exodus each year by removing all leaven from their possession for seven days, eating matzah, and telling the story of their redemption to their children.

Soon after allowing the Children of Israel to depart from Egypt, Pharaoh chases after them to force their return, and the Israelites find themselves trapped between Pharaoh's armies and the sea. G-d tells Moses to raise his staff over the water; the sea splits to allow the Israelites to pass through, and then closes over the pursuing Egyptians. Moses and the Children of Israel sing a song of praise and gratitude to G-d.

For the complete story of Passover visit [www.jewishidaho.com/1845](http://www.jewishidaho.com/1845).



# PHOTOS

## Chanukah Bowl



THE CHABAD TIMES Chabad Lubavitch of Idaho



# PHOTOS

## Mommy & Me / Hebrew School



THE CHABAD TIMES  
Chabad Lubavitch of Idaho

# MESSAGE FROM THE REBBE

## JEWISH SURVIVAL

FROM A 1973 LETTER OF THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE, RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSOHN OF RIGHTEOUS MEMORY

The survival of our Jewish people, and the impact that this matter has on every Jewish individual, is not something which has as yet to be investigated and experimented with. The Jewish people is one of the oldest in the world, and in its long history as a nation it has gone through various conditions and circumstances, mostly very unfavorable, as mentioned above. If one wishes to know the secret of Jewish survival under circumstances which have obliterated larger and stronger nations, one has but to apply the same scientific method as in other cases. In other words, it is necessary to find the common factor, or factors, in all the various periods of Jewish history, which would then have to be taken as the basis of Jewish survival. Should two or three different factors be found, there would be a question of whether all of them were indispensable to survival, or perhaps only one or two would also have been sufficient. But if only one common factor is found, then there can be no doubt that this is the only basis of the survival. This, as mentioned above, is the scientific approach, and is not a matter of belief or faith. Moreover, as in all fields of science, it does not matter whether one does or does not understand the scientific findings. Indeed, in most exact sciences, the facts and actual phenomena are first ascertained, and then a scientific explanation is sought.

Now, going back to the long history of our Jewish people over a period of some thirty-five hundred years, it will be seen that there has been only one factor which has preserved Jewish identity and survival throughout the various periods of our history. This factor was not language, nor country, nor anything else which is often associated with nationhood and nationalism; for in all these things there have been radical changes from one period

to another, as anybody familiar with Jewish history knows. The single factor, and, I emphasize, the one and only factor, which has preserved our Jewish people throughout the ages, under all kinds of circumstances, has been the fulfillment of the mitzvot in day-to-day life, such as



the observance of Shabbat, the putting on of tefillin, and the Torah education of our children. These and all other mitzvot are already embodied in the Torah and have been observed by Jews since the Torah was given at Mount Sinai, and they have been observed in the same way throughout the ages, without change.

A further proof that this is the "secret" of Jewish survival, if further proof is necessary, is the fact that there have always been deviationists; the Torah itself relates that immediately after the Torah was given at Sinai, there were the Golden Calf worshippers. Similarly, throughout the period of the Judges, Prophets and Kings, as well as in the post-Biblical period of the Second Beit Hamikdash, and later. These deviationists attempted to steer another course, away from traditional Judaism, but they could never take root within the Jewish people. Either these deviationists eventually realized their mistake and returned to the fold of observance of Torah and mitzvot, or they were completely assimilated among the nations of the world, without having anything further to do with the Jewish people, least of all with Jewish survival.

# GAN ISRAEL

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On the basis of the principle that the essential thing is the deed, as quoted earlier, I want to bring out the practical conclusion of the thoughts expressed in this letter, namely, that regardless of how your daily life expressed itself in the past, it is my duty, inasmuch as we have established contact between us, to point out to you your duty to yourself, to your surroundings and to our Jewish people as a whole, to order your life in fullest accord with the Torah and mitzvot in the daily life and

conduct.

Needless to say, I realize that such a change entails difficulties and the giving up of various things, but surely it is a small sacrifice in relation to the enormous privilege of fulfilling a sacred obligation to our people, in addition to your sacred obligation to the Jewish community in which you live and to your family.

More on the Rebbe at [www.jewishidaho.com/rebbe](http://www.jewishidaho.com/rebbe)

## A SECOND PASSOVER



On the 14th day of the Jewish month of Iyar (this year 5/22) a "Second Passover" is observed simply by eating a piece of matzah. When the Jews fled Egypt, some of them were unable to participate in the Paschal offering because they were ritually impure. So they prayed to G-d for a second chance to bring the offering. G-d agreed, allowing them to enjoy a "Second Passover" on this date, one month later.

## PARTY OF THIRTY-THREE

Lag B'Omer (day 33 of the Omer count, this year 5/26), is known for barbecues, bonfires and public gatherings of unity. We celebrate the passing of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, the author of the Zohar,

one of the fundamental books of Jewish mysticism. He requested that his death be a celebration of life and we comply with zest. This is also the day when Rabbi Akiva's students pledged to banish pride and value each other. 24,000 of his students had died in a plague before they understood that they could only survive by respecting each other.



## STILL COUNTING?

Forty-nine days after Passover, we reach Shavuot, (this year 6/12-13) the day when G-d gives us the Torah.

More about Shavuot at [www.jewishidaho.com/shavuot](http://www.jewishidaho.com/shavuot).



## Thursday, April 21

FORMAL SEARCH FOR CHAMETZ  
AFTER NIGHTFALL - 9:08 PM

## Friday, April 22

FAST OF THE FIRST BORN  
FINISH EATING CHAMETZ BEFORE 11:20 AM  
BURN CHAMETZ BEFORE 12:24 PM  
LIGHT CANDLES AT 8:19 PM  
SAY BLESSINGS 2 & 3  
COMMUNITY SEDER: 7:30 PM  
FIRST SEDER

## Shabbat, April 23

FIRST DAY OF PASSOVER  
MORNING SERVICES: 10:00 AM  
LIGHT CANDLES\* AFTER 9:25 PM  
SAY BLESSINGS 1 & 3  
SECOND SEDER

## Sunday, April 24

SECOND DAY OF PASSOVER  
MORNING SERVICES: 10:00 AM  
HOLIDAY ENDS AT 9:26 PM

## Thursday, April 28

LIGHT CANDLES AT 8:26 PM  
SAY BLESSING 1

## Friday, April 29

SEVENTH DAY OF PASSOVER  
MORNING SERVICES: 10:00 AM  
LIGHT CANDLES\* AT 8:28 PM  
SAY BLESSING 2

## Shabbat, April 30

FINAL DAY OF PASSOVER  
MORNING SERVICES AT 10:00 AM  
YIZKOR MEMORIAL SERVICE AT 11:15 AM  
MEAL OF MOSHIACH 7:30 PM  
SHABBAT/PASSOVER ENDS AT 9:34 PM\*\*

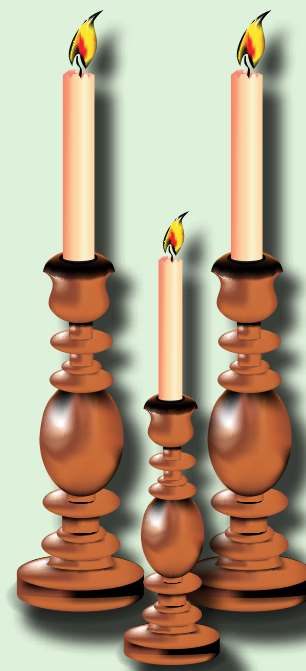
\* Light only from a pre-existing flame.

\*\* Wait about an hour to give the rabbi time to buy back your chametz, and then you can eat chametz to your heart's content.

## CANDLE LIGHTING instructions & blessings

### The Basics of Candle Lighting

- Prepare the candles and matches, and a fireproof surface upon which to place the match after lighting the candles, such as a metal or ceramic plate.
- The candles should be set in close proximity to where you will eat the Shabbat/holiday meal.
- The candles should be sufficiently large so that the flame will burn for the duration of the meal.
- Many have the custom, when applicable, that the man of the household sets up and prepares the candles for lighting.
- Until marriage, women and girls light one candle. Post-marriage, women light (at least) two candles. Some add an additional candle for each child; e.g., a woman with three children lights five candles.
- While dressed in your Shabbat or holiday finery, place several coins in a charity box.
- Light the candles. Place the lit match on the designated surface.
- Extend your hands over the candles, draw them inwards three times in a circular motion, and then cover your eyes.
- Say the blessing(s):



#### BLESSING 1

Baruch Atah Ado-noi,  
Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam,  
Asher Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sav  
Ve-tzi-vanu, Le-had-lik Ner Shel Yom Tov.

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם,  
אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו  
להדליק נר של יום טוב.

*Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the light of the festival.*

#### BLESSING 2

Baruch Atah Ado-noi, Elo-hei-nu  
Melech Ha-olam, Asher Ki-de-sha-nu  
Be-mitz-vo-sav, Ve-tzi-vanu  
Le-had-lik Ner Shel Shabbat ve-Shel Yom Tov.

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם,  
אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו  
להדליק נר של שבת ושל יום טוב.

*Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the light of Shabbat and the festival.*

#### BLESSING 3

Baruch Atah Ado-noi,  
Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam,  
She-heh-che-yah-nu, Ve-ki-ye-ma-nu,  
Ve-hi-gi-ah-nu, Liz-man Ha-zeh.

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם,  
שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה.

*Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.*

All times shown are for Boise, Idaho.  
For more information on Shabbat and festival candle-lighting  
and for candle-lighting times for cities around the world,  
visit [www.jewishidaho.com/shabbatcandles](http://www.jewishidaho.com/shabbatcandles).



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# Passover Seder

**Friday, April 22 - 7:30 PM**

*at the Chabad Jewish Center*

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Registration deadline: April 15, 2016

*No one will be turned away for lack of funds.*

For more information about Passover look inside this issue or visit

[www.jewishidaho.com/passover](http://www.jewishidaho.com/passover)

