

THE OXFORD SYNAGOGUE-CENTRE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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April 2017

Nisan 5777

SHABBAT TIMES

🔊 Parasha - 🕯 Candle Lighting

🕯 Shabbat ends (Maariv & Havdalah)

For service times see page 2 & 3

7 & 8 April – 12 Nisan

🔊 Tzav

🕯 5:42 – 🕯 6:30

14 & 15 April – 19 Nisan

🔊 Shir Hashirim

🕯 5:35 – 🕯 6:24

21 & 22 April – 26 Nisan

🔊 Shemini

🕯 5:28 – 🕯 6:17

28 & 29 April – 3 Iyar

🔊 Tazria

🕯 5:22 – 🕯 6:12

5 & 6 May – 10 Iyar

🔊 Acharei Mot Kedoshim

🕯 5:17 – 🕯 6:07

RABBI'S MESSAGE

I am looking forward to my trip to Oliver Tambo International Airport later in the week, to collect those of the children who are able to be with us for Pesach this year. One day, who knows, we will have all our children and grandchildren around one Seder table again... But we will all rejoice around our Yom Tov table, *en famille* and for a few days will not spare a thought for cabinet reshuffles or the value of the Rand.

Over the years I have noted—and have become a little disturbed over—a phenomenon that I will refer to as the 'quantitative' Seder. In this day and age when numbers and figures have become so significant, they have even permeated our approach to observing Pesach. It seems as if the Four Questions have been rewritten as follows: 1) How many people are you having (did you have) at your Seder? 2) How many trestle tables did you have to

hire/borrow? 3) How many of your Pesach glasses can you spare for me this year? 4) What time did your Seder end last night?

Indeed on this night, which is different from all other nights, quantities are relevant. There are specific obligations that we have to fulfil, and Mitzvot that have to be performed according to precise specifications. We must drink four Cups of wine, no more, no less, and each must contain at least a 'Reviit' (at least 86 ml). There is a minimal amount of Matza to be consumed at the beginning of the meal, and then again at the end as the Afikoman (30 g, or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a square, machine-made matzah or $\frac{1}{2}$ of a hand-made round matzah).

Large Seders are wonderful but that is not what makes for a successful observance of Pesach. If we are going to invest energy into increasing the Seder quantitatively, let us follow the advice of the author of the Haggadah: 'Kol Hamarbeh Lesaper Biyetziat Mitzrayim Hareh Zeh Meshubach'—'One who dwells on discussing the Exodus from Egypt is to be praised.' A considerable attendance is not the essential ingredient to a good Seder. Involvement and participation are.

This year, let us rather have qualitative Sedorim, where all our (many) guests are given the opportunity to fulfil all the Mitzvot of the evening according to the age-old traditions. We will then be able to end the night by sincerely declaring 'Chassal Sidur Pesach Kehilchato' - 'We have completed the Pesach Seder according to Halacha.'

I wish you and yours a Chag Pesach Kasher veSameach—a Kosher and Joyous Passover

Rabbi Yossi Chaikin

FROM THE REBBETZIN

Ingrained in the genes of every Jewish woman are those 'erev Pesach nerves'. It is at this time of the year, 10 days before Pesach begins, that everyone is involved in Pesach talk, no matter what their Pesach plans are. I was fascinated today, standing in the queue to pay at Hypermarket (no they haven't figured out they need extra people at the tills). Everybody was being very friendly, peering into each other's trolleys and commenting (so much fish—how many people are you having for the Seder?), complaining (have you seen the price of Pesach products this year?), reminiscing (in my day we didn't have all this) and sharing (I don't do Pesach any more since my kids emigrated)—strangers baring their souls to each other. It is so special to be part of the Jewish nation.

I couldn't help pondering all this, as I eventually drove home. Have we missed the point? Is this what Pesach is really all about? Should we spend even just a little time preparing ourselves spiritually for Pesach—getting rid of our personal chomets, breaking free of our personal Egypt?

Wishing you a Chag Pesach Kasher Vesameach.

Have a good month

Rivky

PLEASE NOTE THAT STATEMENTS WILL NOT BE SENT OUT FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH. IF YOU REQUIRE A STATEMENT PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE ON 011-646-6020 OR accounts@oxfordshul.com

DVAR TORAH***Insights to share at the Seder Table****By Rabbi Aaron Goldscheider
(aish.com)*

1. The 15 steps of the Seder are to be viewed as rungs in a ladder and are intended to move us toward a spiritual ascent on the night of Passover. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook was once asked, "Who is on a greater spiritual level, a person on a low rung or on a high rung of the spiritual ladder?" He answered: "It depends which direction the person is moving. If the person on the low rung is climbing and growing day by day, he/she is spiritually alive and engaged. Conversely, if a person on a high rung is moving downward, he/she has lost spiritual élan and may continue to sink."

2. The Viznitzer Rebbe was asked why when burning the chametz we also burn the candle used in our search for the chametz. Certainly there is no suspicion of chametz adhering to it. He replied: This candle was used for one purpose only - to search for chametz. A candle whose sole existence is for the purpose of seeking out the negative must be burned.

3. Why is the night of Passover called Seder night? It hints to the idea that everything that happens to us is not coincidence or happenstance. What we experience in our lives, in truth, has seder, 'order', even when it may not seem apparent to us. Our lives are overseen by the Master of the Universe. This truth we discover on Seder night. - Maharal of Prague

4. The great Hasidic master, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, was puzzled as to why the Torah calls the festival the "Holiday of Matzah," Chag HaMatzot, while we call the holiday Pesach, Passover. Why the discrepancy?

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak explained that these two terms represent G-d's loving feeling for the Jewish people and the Jewish people's loving feeling for G-d, each wanting to give full credit to the other for their act of love and faith.

Passover, Pesach, is a statement about G-d's faith in us, passing over the homes of the Jewish people in Egypt and choosing us to be His people. We call the holiday Passover in recognition of this, and to show our thankfulness for G-d's graciousness and kindness. By following G-d into the desert, the Jewish people showed an unwavering faith in their Maker. The Torah calls the holiday Chag HaMatzot, "Holiday of Matzah" suggesting that G-d "applauds" the Jewish people and "recognizes" their greatness and their faith in Him and going into the desert. G-d prefers to call the holiday by the name that credits the Jewish people for their faith and loyalty.

In this way, the two names of the holiday reflect the eternal faith of G-d in Israel and the eternal faith of Israel in G-d. Without both the Jewish people's faith in G-d and G-d's faith in the Jewish people we

would have never survived to this day.

5. The Seder begins with an invitation to those in need to join us in our homes for the Seder. This is an act of kindness and tzedaka. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook taught that we begin the Seder this way because the moment we were freed from slavery our true essence could emerge. As soon as we reenact the story of our liberation we engage in the act most characteristic of us as people: feeding the hungry.

6. Using the ancient Aramaic words of the text of the Haggadah we call out kol dichfin, 'all who are hungry' come and join our Seder. This is followed by second call, kol detzrich, 'all who are in need' join our Seder. This second invitation is not addressed to those in need of food; we have already reached out to them with the first phrase. Rather, here we are inviting those who are lonely, those in need of companionship and friendship. We Jews, who were slaves in Egypt and have suffered in the hands of countless oppressors, unfortunately know all too well the feeling of being forsaken and abandoned. On the night of the Seder we open our doors with warmth and love embracing all those in need. - Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik

7. Why do we break the matzah in half to start the Seder? Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik suggested that we break the matzah to emulate the conduct of our ancestors in Egypt. Those who had more to eat broke their bread and shared it with others who had less. Yachatz, the act of breaking the matzah in half is a symbol of chesed, loving kindness. Even under the harshest conditions the Jew had mercy and shared his meager rations with his fellow brothers and sisters.

SERVICE TIMES**SHACHARIT (A.M.)**

Sunday and Public Holidays	8:00
Monday to Friday	7:15
26/04 & 27/04 (Rosh Chodesh): 7:00	
Shabbat & Festivals	9:00

MINCHA AND MAARIV (P.M.)

Sunday to Thursday	5:45
from 16/04	5:30
from 30/04	5:15
Friday	5:30
from 05/05	5:20
Shabbat	5:30
from 22/04	5:15
from 06/05	5:00

PESACH 5777 TIMETABLE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SHABBAT
9 April 13 Nisan	10 April 14 Nisan	11 April 15 Nisan	12 April 16 Nisan	13 April 17 Nisan	14 April 18 Nisan	15 April 19 Nisan
Shacharit: 8:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. Last day to sell Chametz Checking for Chametz in the evening	EREV PESACH Shacharit: 7:00 a.m. <i>Siyum after the Service</i> Eat Chametz until 10:00 a.m. - Burn & Annul Chametz before 11:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. ‏ 5:39 p.m.	1st DAY PESACH Shacharit: 9:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. Second Seder in the evening ‏ 6:28 p.m.*	2nd DAY PESACH Shacharit: 9:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. ‏ 6:27 p.m.	First Day Chol Hamoed Shacharit: 7:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m.	Second Day Chol Hamoed <i>Public Holiday</i> Shacharit: 8:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. ‏ 5:35 p.m.	Shabbat Chol Hamoed Shacharit: 9:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:30 p.m. ‏ 6:24 p.m.
16 April 20 Nisan	17 April 21 Nisan	18 April 22 Nisan	19 April 23 Nisan	20 April 24 Nisan	21 April 25 Nisan	22 April 26 Nisan
Fourth Day Chol Hamoed Shacharit: 8:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:30 p.m. ‏ 5:33 p.m.	7th DAY PESACH <i>Public Holiday</i> Shacharit: 9:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:30 p.m. ‏ 6:22 p.m.*	8th DAY PESACH Shacharit: 9:00 a.m. Yizkor: 10:30 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:30 p.m. ‏ 6:21 p.m.	Issru Chag Shacharit: 7:15 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:30 p.m.	Shacharit: 7:15 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:30 p.m.	Shacharit: 7:15 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:30 p.m. ‏ 5:22 p.m.	SHABBAT Shacharit: 9:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv: 5:15 p.m. ‏ 6:12 p.m.

‏ Candle Lighting -- * Light from pre-existing flame – ‏ Shabbat or Chag ends (Havdalah)

WHAT TO DO, AND HOW TO DO IT

★ Maot Chittim

It is an old and widespread custom to give Tzedakah during the first part of the month of Nissan to enable the less fortunate to celebrate Pesach in an adequate and dignified manner. This is in keeping with the declaration we make at the beginning of the Seder, "all who are hungry, let them come in and eat." Collections are thus taken up by our welfare organisations, and in particular by the Chevra Kadisha, specifically for this purpose. To assist those in need within our community, now is a good time to make a contribution to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund. This can be sent to the Shul office or deposited directly into ABSA account 38043260534 (Branch code 632005)

★ Sale of Chametz (Must be completed before Monday 10 April at 8:30 a.m.)

During the eight days of Pesach one may neither eat nor own any Chametz (leavened food). It is not practical to consume or to physically get rid of all Chametz before the onset of Pesach. One may however sell all Chametz to a non-Jewish person - if the sale is valid according to Jewish law then the Chametz is not 'owned' during Pesach.

The technical details of this sale are involved because the goods do not physically change hands. It is highly recommended that you appoint a rabbi as your proxy to sell your Chametz before Pesach. The rabbi will also re-purchase your Chametz from the Gentile at the completion of Pesach

★ Bedikat Chametz (Sunday 9 April in the evening)

This is the traditional search for Chametz (leaven and leavened products), using a candle, wooden spoon and feather. It is customary to hide ten pieces of bread around the house. These are then "found" when the search is performed.

Before starting recite the following Bracha: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל בִּיעוּר חָמֵץ

BARUCH ATA ADO-NAI ELO-HEINU MELECH HA-OLAM ASHER KIDESHANU BEMITZVOTAV VETZIVANU AL BI-UR CHAMETZ.

When the search is complete, recite the following formula to annul any Chametz that you have not found (original Aramaic text can be found in the first pages of most Haggadot):

ANY FORM OF LEAVEN THAT IS IN MY POSSESSION WHICH I HAVE NOT SEEN OR HAVE NOT REMOVED, OR HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF, SHALL BE NULL AND DISOWNED AS THE DUST OF THE EARTH.

★ Siyum (Monday 10 April after the morning service)

All male first-born are obligated to fast on the day before Pesach to commemorate the miracle of their salvation from the plague of Death of the First Born. There is one way that this obligation is waived: if the first-born takes part in a festive Mitzvah-meal, such as the meal after a Bris, or after a Siyum (the completion of a tractate of the Talmud). A Siyum will be made in Shul after the morning service.

★ Burning of Chametz (Monday 10 April before 11:00 a.m.)

Any Chametz found in the course of the previous evening's search and any other leftover Chametz is burnt at this stage.

There will be a fire available at the Shul's service entrance (North Avenue side) for burning of Chametz between 10:30 and 11:00 a.m.

★ Annulment of Chametz (Monday 10 April before 11:00 a.m.)

The second formula for annulling the Chametz is recited after the Chametz has been burnt (Here again the original Aramaic text can be found in the first pages of most Haggadot.)

ANY FORM OF LEAVEN THAT IS IN MY POSSESSION WHICH I HAVE SEEN OR HAVE NOT SEEN, WHICH I HAVE REMOVED OR HAVE NOT REMOVED, SHALL BE NULL AND DISOWNED AS THE DUST OF THE EARTH.

MAZALTOV

We wish a hearty Mazal Tov to:

BIRTHS

- Marke & Jeanette Markovitz and to Philip & Rilla Jacobson on the birth of a great granddaughter in Jerusalem.

BIRTHDAYS

- Arthur Aaron on his 85th birthday on 5th April.

- Solly Smith on his 95th birthday on 12th April.
- Norma Utian on her 80th birthday on 30th April.
- Una Berman on her 100th birthday.

REFUAH SHLEIMA

We wish a Speedy recovery to:

- Stanley Smidt
- Barry Speigel
- Aileen Shifren

**BEREAVEMENTS**

Our condolences to the following who have suffered bereavements recently:



- Anthony and Manfred Jossel and to Bernice Thal on the death of their mother, Sylvia Jossel.
- Val Port on the death of her husband, Max

Wishing You a
Kosher
and
Happy
Pesach