

PRE-PESACH DIGEST 2020



How is this Pesach different than any other Pesach? This year, because of the ongoing danger of the Covid-19 coronavirus, a number of leniencies have been allowed which would not be recommended in a normal year.

BEFORE PESACH

Mechirat Chometz

Normally mechirat chometz is done by filling out a form and giving that form to the Rabbi. In addition to the actual document, a number of other procedures are in place to strengthen this authorization. Those procedures usually include a kinyan sudar (the transfer of an object from one person to another, usually a handkerchief). They also usually include a handshake as well as verbal authorization. Some even give the Rabbi a small renumeration to act as their agent.

This year the arrangements for the sale of chometz are all being done virtually. You can download the sale of chometz form from our website by clicking [here](#). The form can then be filled out and emailed back to greatnecksynagogue@gmail.com, or faxed to 516-487-6149.

Additionally, the sale of chometz can be authorized by filling out the online form also available on our [website](#).

Siyum Bechorim

Erev Pesach is usually marked by the completion of a volume of the Gemara or a seder of mishnayot followed by a seudat mitzvah. Everyone who is present for the siyum is invited to participate in this special meal. As a result of this participation, firstborn children no longer need to fast.

The custom of firstborns fasting on erev Pesach dates back to the Talmud Bavli and Yerushalmi and is generally assumed to be a sign of gratitude for not perishing in the plague of the death of the firstborn Egyptian children.

This year because minyanim are not being held, there are several options. The first is to actually make a siyum yourself (always a commendable idea, although perhaps a bit late). Additionally permission has been given for the firstborns to virtually participate in a siyum that is made through the use of modern technology. We will publicize the details of our Zoom siyum.

For Rookies and Returnees

Pre-Pesach Shmooze
With Rabbi Polakoff
and Rabbi Lichten

[Click here for the video](#)

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FOOD ITEMS FOR PESACH

The general rule is that one should only use processed products with an acceptable Kosher L'Pesach supervision. Products that are not processed can be used with regular acceptable hashgacha. Examples of this would be raw meat, chicken or fish as long as it is unflavored, as well as fruits and vegetables. Items that were purchased before Pesach and stored in the refrigerator or freezer may be used as long as they were wrapped. If someone is in a difficult situation and can't get such products, please reach out to our rabbinic team to determine if there are any leniencies on which to rely.

Milk

Ideally milk should be purchased with Kosher L'Pesach supervision. If this is difficult, milk which was purchased **before Pesach** with regularly acceptable hashgacha may be used. However, **during Pesach**, only Kosher L'Pesach milk should be purchased during Pesach.

Previously opened packages

Packages of products with Kosher L'Pesach supervision (such as cheese) that were opened before Pesach may be used on Pesach as long as the contents did not come into contact with any chometz.

Kosher Food Guides for Pesach

Several of the major kashrut organizations publish Food Guides for Pesach. These guides not only contain information about products (both those that need special Kosher L'Pesach supervision, as well as those that can be used with regular gashgacha), but also other interesting information about Pesach. They can be accessed by clicking on the following locations:

Orthodox Union (OU)

<https://oukosher.org/passover/>

Chicago Rabbinical Council (CRC)

<http://www.crcweb.org/Pesach2020.php>

Kosher Quest

<https://kosherquest.org/passover/>

KASHERING UTENSILS FOR PESACH

Kashering keilim is one of the most anxiety producing anticipations in getting ready for Pesach. Purchasing new pots and other utensils is a better option than kashering. It's even preferable to use plastic plates and utensils, rather than kashering.

Sometimes the only option is to kasher. The Pesach edition of SCOPE (which you can access [here](#)) has a full section on the laws of kashering.

In addition to the details of kashering in the SCOPE, there are several videos that can walk you through the process.

Special thanks to the Rabbinical Council of Bergen County and the Kof-K.

The following videos were produced by the RCBC and the Kof-K Supervision Service.

Introduction to Basic Kashering
<https://youtu.be/ixvEzNwhPkg>

Kashering an Oven
<https://youtu.be/lcTIx0NqGPk>

Kashering a Stove Top
<https://youtu.be/bHDk98l42VQ>

Kashering Counters and Sinks
<https://youtu.be/QaH6f4onpRI>

Kashering Utensils
<https://youtu.be/PiLw197EGd8>

Kashering a Microwave
<https://youtu.be/HehNOzZpmKA>

Kashering a Dishwasher

We give detailed instructions in SCOPE on kashering a dishwasher. You can access those instructions [here](#).

Recently a Teshuvah was published by Rav Herschel Schachter permitting the kashering of the dishwashers racks as well. The Teshuvah can be found [here](#).

Toveling Dishes

The keilim mikvah is now closed due to the difficulty in maintaining social distancing. Accordingly, other arrangements need to be made to allow the use of newly acquired metal and glass utensils. There are several options.

Option #1

Use any of the natural body of water surrounding the Great Neck peninsula to immerse your utensils.

Option #2

Declare your utensil ownerless. The immersing of new utensils is only required for utensils you own. This can be done in accordance with Rav Herschel Schachter's guidelines [here](#).

Option #3

Arrange for the sale of your utensils to a non-Jew, and borrow them back for use over Pesach by clicking [here](#).

ZOOM SEDER?

Dear GNS Families,

On Tuesday of this week, a number of rabbis in Israel signed a letter addressing the permissibility of launching Zoom before the Pesach Yom Tov begins and leaving it running to communicate with family members on Yom Tov, thus facilitating older and younger generations to remain connected. This would additionally enable separated families to participate in a virtual Seder.

Subsequent to the ruling, many prominent poskim have disagreed with their decision. Rabbi Menachem Pearl, head of the Tzomet Institute in Israel described the ruling to be "dangerous", noting that computers function differently than standard electricity/fire and require additional halachik considerations. Israel's Chief Rabbi David Lau described the ruling as irresponsible and was fearful that it would deceive the public. Additionally, no poskim in America have agreed with the ruling. Finally, a number of the rabbis who signed the original ruling have recanted from their positions.

As a result, we cannot permit the use of zoom over Yom Tov for our families. In a case of serious mental health concerns and potential danger to life a further discussion with us is encouraged.

We have a responsibility to adhere to the guidelines of halacha and the traditions of our people. There is a long-standing precedent and halachik deliberation for rulings that may be applied to certain individuals or communities that are not to be applied elsewhere. Context, timelines, conditions and personalities need to be accounted for.

If you are interested in learning more about this matter, we encourage you to read the story (Hebrew) linked to the top picture or view the video (English) linked to the bottom picture.

With gratitude and respect,
Rabbis Polakoff and Lichten

Statement of Tzohar Rabbinic Organization



Explanation by Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner



MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SEDER

While Pesach is a Yom Tov that normally brings families together, we STRONGLY encourage you to maintain the social distancing that has become our community norm. This is a matter of pikuach nefesh and needs to be taken with the utmost of seriousness by all of us. Read this important statement [STAY HOME: SAVE LIVES.](#)

There are opportunities to be taken advantage of to help make the most of your Seder this year.

Order Food for Pesach

With so much to worry about these days, why not make it easier on yourself by ordering prepared food for Pesach. Additionally you will be helping the businesses we rely on to survive during these difficult times. Do it soon and don't wait till the last minute. Some suggestions are below:

Middle Neck Glatt

<https://tinyurl.com/stcwchs>

Shop Delight

<http://www.shopdelight.com/>

Colbeh

<https://tinyurl.com/vxouwub>

Everfresh

<https://www.everfreshsupermarket.com/>

RAM Caterers

<https://www.simplyramfoods.com/>

Main Event Mauzone

<http://www.maineventmauzone.com/>

Download interesting Haggadot and other material to use at the Seder

For those who need an abbreviated version of the Haggadah

<https://www.aish.com/atr/Early-Seder.html>

Haggadah from Rabbi Tzvi Romm

<http://bialystoker.org/v%27chai%20bahem%20hagada%20%283%29.pdf>

Special prayer said before eating chometz at Bergen Belsen (the back story)

<http://ou.org.s3.amazonaws.com/publications/ja/5761spring/storyofprayer.pdf>

SEDER IN A BOX

We have received donations to cover a limited number of specially prepared food, as well as everything else which is needed for the Seder, delivered to the door of our elderly and homebound. If you know of someone who could benefit from this, please email either of the rabbis.

Middle Neck Glatt also offers this option for regular purchase.