

Exodus Magazine  
Holiday Companion

# PASSOVER

Shabbat, April 12 to  
Sunday, April 20, 2025

All times displayed in this guide  
are for the Greater Toronto Area.



## What is Passover?

Passover (Pesach in Hebrew) commemorates the emancipation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt. It is observed by avoiding bread and other leavened foods and highlighted by the Seder meals that include four cups of wine, eating matzah and bitter herbs, and retelling the story of the Exodus. The name comes from the fact that the houses of the Israelites were "passed over" during the plague of the firstborn, and also reflects the notion that the Exodus is connected with the supernatural.



### Shabbat and Passover in 2025

Because the eve of Passover falls on Shabbat this year, some of the rituals and customs associated with the eve of Passover are different:

**Fast of the Firstborn**, usually on the eve of Passover, is moved up to Thursday, April 10.

**Cleaning for Passover, selling chametz and burning chametz** need to be completed earlier than usual due to Shabbat. See the following page for details.

**Cooking and preparations for the Seder** need to be completed before Shabbat (Friday, April 11), since these activities are forbidden on Shabbat. Setting the Seder table should be done only after Shabbat has concluded (8:42pm on Saturday, April 12).

**Shabbat Meals:** With the exception of bread, all the food eaten on Shabbat should be kosher for Passover. Challah bread should be eaten away from the rest of the food, over a napkin that captures the crumbs. On Saturday, the challah should be consumed before 11am and the crumbs should be disposed of by flushing them down the toilet.



### Shabbat and Holiday Candle Lighting

Shabbat and Holiday candles are lit by women and girls. On the second evening of consecutive holy days, light from a pre-existing flame. Light a 48-hour candle before the onset of Shabbat to be used for this purpose.

#### Candle Lighting times:

- Friday, April 11 at 7:39pm
- Saturday, April 12 after 8:42pm, from a pre-existing flame
- Sunday, April 13 after 8:44pm, from a pre-existing flame
- Friday, April 18 at 7:47pm
- Saturday, April 19 after 8:52pm, from a pre-existing flame



## Passover Resources

**JRCC Website:** Enjoy dozens of articles and videos on the JRCC Passover minisite at [jrcc.org/Passover](http://jrcc.org/Passover). Content for children at [jrcc.org/Kids](http://jrcc.org/Kids)

**JRCC Haggadah:** A comprehensive guide and walk-through of Passover preparations (cleaning, selling chametz etc.) in three languages (Hebrew-Russian-English). To receive a copy, contact our office or visit [jrccbookstore.org](http://jrccbookstore.org).



## We're here to help

The JRCC is here to assist with all your Passover needs. You can join a community seder in your neighborhood at one of the JRCC's branches, purchase matzah, and sell your chametz. For assistance in making your Passover plans or any other assistance, visit [jrcc.org/Passover](http://jrcc.org/Passover) or contact the JRCC.



## Chametz vs. Matzah

Why is eating Matzah on Passover so fundamental? Chametz and Matzah are almost the same substance, containing the same ingredients of flour and water. The one key difference is that while Chametz bread rises, filling itself with hot air, the Matzah stays flat and humble. Chametz represents that swelling of ego, is the greatest form of enslavement. When we celebrate the Festival of Freedom, as Passover is also known, we disavow Chametz as a vehicle for eradicating ego. Because the only way to truly and freely connect to our Creator and to one another is with humility, to ensure our egos don't get in the way.



## No Chametz

The Torah forbids us to own or possess any Chametz throughout the week of Passover. Here are the basic steps to getting rid of Chametz:



### CLEAN IT

*When: In the weeks preceding Passover*

Thoroughly check and clean any place in your home, office or car that might possibly contain traces of food.



### SELL IT

*When: by Thursday, April 10*

The non-perishable Chametz products you want to store and keep for after Passover should be sold so they are not technically in your possession for the duration of the holiday. Use the form or visit [jrcc.org/sellchametz](http://jrcc.org/sellchametz).



### SEARCH FOR IT

*When: Thursday, April 10, after dark*

Search for crumbs and remnants of Chametz that may have escaped your clean-up operation. A special blessing is recited before the search, you can find it in your Haggadah (JRCC Haggadah page 2).



### BURN IT

*When: Friday, April 11, before 12:11pm*

Burn the Chametz you found during the search.



### STOP EATING IT

*When: Saturday, April 12, before 11:04am*

After this time, you can no longer eat any Chametz. Any Chametz left over should be disposed of.



### NULLIFY IT

*When: Saturday, April 12, before 12:11pm*

Nullify any Chametz in your property that may have been overlooked by reciting a unique passage, which can be found in your Haggadah (JRCC Haggadah page 3).

① Learn more about the prohibition of possessing Chametz and lots of resources for all the above at [jrcc.org/chametz](http://jrcc.org/chametz).

# The Passover Seder

## When:

Saturday, April 12 and Sunday, April 13, after dark

## How:

Follow your Haggadah step-by-step and have a great time!

① The JRCC Haggadah has a very informative introduction with clear explanations and instructions about the Seder. To prepare, you can also visit [jrcc.org/Seder](http://jrcc.org/Seder) before the holiday for fascinating articles, useful information, and practical tutorials.



## The Seder in Short

The Passover Seder contains the observance of many biblical and rabbinical mitzvot, including: eating matzah, eating maror (bitter herbs), drinking four cups of wine, relating the story of the Exodus to our children, and reclining as a symbol of freedom.

### The most essential parts of the Passover Seder are:

1. Telling the Story of the Exodus
2. Eating the Matzah (27 grams)
3. Eating the Marror bitter herb (18 grams)
4. Drinking the Four Cups of Wine
5. Feeling Free – reclining consuming the wine and Matza
6. Celebration and gratitude to G-d



## From Chaos to Order

The phrase “Passover Seder” is actually an oxymoron: The word “Passover” means to skip, to pass over. The word “Seder” means order. So the Passover Seder is actually about bringing chaos into order. The supernatural nature of the Passover energy, reflected in the astounding miracles that accompanied the Exodus, seems somewhat out of reach, disconnected from our lives today. The fifteen steps that comprise the order of the Passover Seder are designed to bring that lofty energy down to earth so that we can assimilate it into our minds, hearts and lives as we are today – empowering us to live a life that is both supernatural and grounded at the same time.



## The Short, Long Road

When the Israelites finally left Egypt during the Exodus, they took the long way. (This is even before taking the really long way of forty years in the desert, and then taking the really, really long way of two thousand years in exile.)

The Baal Shem Tov teaches that there are no shortcuts when it comes to radical transformations. The dramatic stories of “overnight success” portrayed in Hollywood and Silicon Valley are actually the result of many years of hard work and perseverance. Do not be deluded – there are no shortcuts.

When it comes to all of life’s endeavors, especially our personal growth and spiritual pursuits, we should not attempt a sudden about-turn; instead, there should be a gradual progression. A sudden about-turn will not be maintained and eventually will lead to regression.

As the Alter Rebbe points out in Tanya, the only shortcuts are the ones that don’t actually reach the destination. Rather than taking the illusory short and easy path, which is actually long because it never gets us where we want to go, we should seek the long and truthful path, which is actually short because it eventually takes us where we need to be.



## Double Dipping

At the Passover Seder, what is the inner significance of dipping the vegetable in salt water and the bitter herb in charoset?

The Israelites in Egypt suffered greatly. And while we can never fully understand the meaning of suffering, the Kabbalists have taught that sometimes we suffer in one lifetime in order to correct something from a past life. This was the case with the Jews in Egypt.

The mystics teach that the Israelites in Egypt were reincarnations of two previous generations: the generation of the Great Flood and the generation that built the Tower of Babel. This is why we see clear parallels between them. Just like the generation of the Flood, Israelites were drowned in the Nile River. And just like the builders of the Tower of Babel, the Israelites had to make bricks and build buildings. Reincarnation is a spiritual system by which people can correct past wrongs. In the times of the Flood, people were violent, dishonest and corrupt. Their sins were primarily against their fellow human beings. In the times of the Tower of Babel, however, they treated each other kindly. Their mistake was that they believed that humanity could exist without a higher cause. The purpose of their tower was to take over the heavens and supplant Divine power with human power.

These two mistakes are still around today. Some believe that you can be a good person without being religious. As long as you are nice to people, as long as you don’t hurt anyone, you are a good person and don’t need a higher authority in your life. Others believe that as long as you pray to G-d and follow religious rituals, it doesn’t matter how you treat other people. You can be religious without being good.

Both are mistaken. Being religious without being good makes no sense at all. If you love G-d, then you love His children. Every human is made in G-d’s image, and so you cannot honor G-d if you dishonor humanity. You can’t pray to the G-d that tells you to love your fellow as yourself and then treat your fellow like dirt.

But you also can’t be truly good without G-d, because there can be no such thing as absolute good without an absolute source. If morality is relative, then it can be defined however I want it to be defined. There can be no objective definition of right and wrong. Without absolute morality, as history has shown us, anything can be justified.

The Israelites were the first to recognize that living a Divine life means living a good life, and that in order to know what “good” is you need G-d. Unlike the generation of the Flood, who disregarded human decency, and unlike the generation of the Tower of Babel, who rejected Divine authority, the Israelites survived Egypt to establish a new society based on G-d-given goodness.

At the Seder table, we have a reminder of these two misguided generations: we dip the vegetable in the salt water that commemorates the floodwaters, and the bitter herb in the charoset that represents the bricks that built the tower. We have seen the tragic consequences of dividing between G-d and good. We must ensure that the two never part.

### Sale of Chametz Form

SUBMIT BY: THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2025 AT 9PM

Sell your chametz online at [jrcc.org/sellchametz](http://jrcc.org/sellchametz)

I (We):

FULL NAME(S)

[Head(s) of the Household] Hereby authorize Rabbi Yoseph Y. Zaltzman to dispose of all chametz that may be in my (our) possession wherever it may be — at home, at my (our) place of business, or elsewhere — in accordance with the requirements of Jewish Law as incorporated in the special contract for the sale of chametz.

HOME ADDRESS

BUSINESS ADDRESS

SIGNATURE

DATE

SIGNATURE

DATE

# The Intermediate Days

When: Tuesday, April 15 to Friday, April 18

Chol Hamoed (literally, “the weekday of the holiday”) refers to the “intermediate period” of the festivals between the beginning and ending holy days. These days are a fusion of the mundane (“chol) and the sacred (“moed”). These are not holy days like Shabbat and Yom Tov during which work is prohibited, yet they are still festival days that are observed with limited work restrictions.

The general idea is to minimize work so as to maximize the holiday celebration – a time to reflect, connect, and celebrate. Be Merry – it’s a week-long festival! Try to drink wine and eat Matzah each day.

📌 Learn more about Chol Hamoed at [jrcc.org/CholHamoed](http://jrcc.org/CholHamoed)



## Yizkor

When: Sunday, April 20

Yizkor is the remembrance prayer for departed loved ones, where we implore G-d to remember the souls of our relatives and friends that have passed on. The main component of Yizkor is our private pledge to give charity following the holiday in honor of the deceased. By giving charity, we are performing a positive physical deed in this world, something that the departed can no longer do, especially if our good deeds emulate theirs. Yizkor renews and strengthens the connection between us and our loved one, brings merit to the departed souls, and elevates them in their celestial homes.

### Yizkor Card

Yes, I want the name(s) of my relatives / friends to be mentioned during the Yizkor Service and for the card to be placed on the wall during services. Please, fill in clearly and submit by April 10, 2025:

#### NAMES OF THE DECEASED

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mother’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mother’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mother’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mother’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of my family / friend I make the following donation:

\$18  \$25  \$36  \$54  \$100  \$180  Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### YOUR INFORMATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque enclosed or

Please charge my credit card:  Visa  Master Card  AmEx

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## Counting the Omer

When: Each evening after dark, for 49 days, starting Sun, April 13

The counting of the Omer leads up to the holiday of Shavuot and the giving of the Torah on the fiftieth day. The 49 days embody the 49 steps of self-improvement.

📌 Learn more about this Mitzva at [jrcc.org/omer](http://jrcc.org/omer)



## All Night Learning

When: Friday night, April 18 - the 7th night of Pesach

It is customary to remain awake all night until dawn, studying Torah, in commemoration of the great miracle of the Splitting of the Sea, which occurred at dawn on the Seventh Day of Passover.



## The Feast of Moshiach

When: Sunday, April 20, in the afternoon

On this final day of Passover we strive for the highest level of freedom, and focus on the Final Redemption. Following the Baal Shem Tov’s custom, we end Passover with “Moshiach’s Feast” — a festive meal complete with matzah and four cups of wine, during which we celebrate the imminent arrival of Moshiach. This unique experience begins before sunset and continues until after nightfall.

📌 Learn more at [jrcc.org/MoshiachFeast](http://jrcc.org/MoshiachFeast)

### Moshiach Time

One of the most constricting elements of the human condition is the phenomenon of time. Time carries off the past and holds off the future, confining our lives to a temporal sliver of “present.” But on the first night of Passover we break the bonds of time, having received a mandate to experience the Exodus “as if he himself has come out of Egypt.” We recall the Exodus in our minds, verbalize it in the telling of the Haggadah, digest it in the form of matzah and wine. As we pass over the centuries, memory — those faded visages of past that generally constitute our only answer to the tyranny of time — becomes experience, and history is made current and real.

On the last days of Passover, our transcendence of time enters a new, heightened phase: it is one thing to vitalize memory to the point of actual re-experience, but quite another to make real an event that lies in the future, especially an event that has no parallel in the history of man. Yet in the closing hours of Passover, we enter into the world of Moshiach. Having vaulted over millennia of past on the seder nights, we now surmount the blank wall of future, to taste the matzah and wine of the ultimate redemption.

As the Rebbe teaches, when we open our eyes in this way, our awareness itself makes it real.

**Passover concludes at 8:53pm on Sunday, April 20**

Wait one hour before using Chometz.